GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 21 1997

Football Premiership: Arsenal 1 Blackburn Rovers 3

Arsenal fade into a Wright red mist

Martin Thorpe

LOSING his rag is once again all the rage for Ian Wright. The combined frustration of losing at home, being booked, being booed off, scoring once in his last eight league games and knowing that Arsenal are trying to sign a new striker all came to a head last Saturday evening.

The head was that of an incandescent Mr Angry leaning out of the Highbury dressing-room window and directing insulting language at passing fans in annoyance at their earlier booing.

Two months ago Wright was the darling of the crowd after breaking the club scoring record. Now the love affair is surely over. Hurling abuse at supporters is guaranteed to win no one's heart.

According to an eyewitness: "Ian Wright appeared at the window of the east stand clad in vest and underpants haranguing the crowd.

"He was absolutely furious. At one point it seemed as though he was actually trying to get out of the window, so apoplectic was he. The crowd were shouting 'we pay your wages' and seemed pretty appalled that this guy could do this."

So annoyed was one fan that he complained to the police, who spoke to Wright and are now considering whether to charge him. The club have dealt with the matter internally and the Football Association will await any reports. Wright is still on a suspended sentence from the FA after incidents last season.

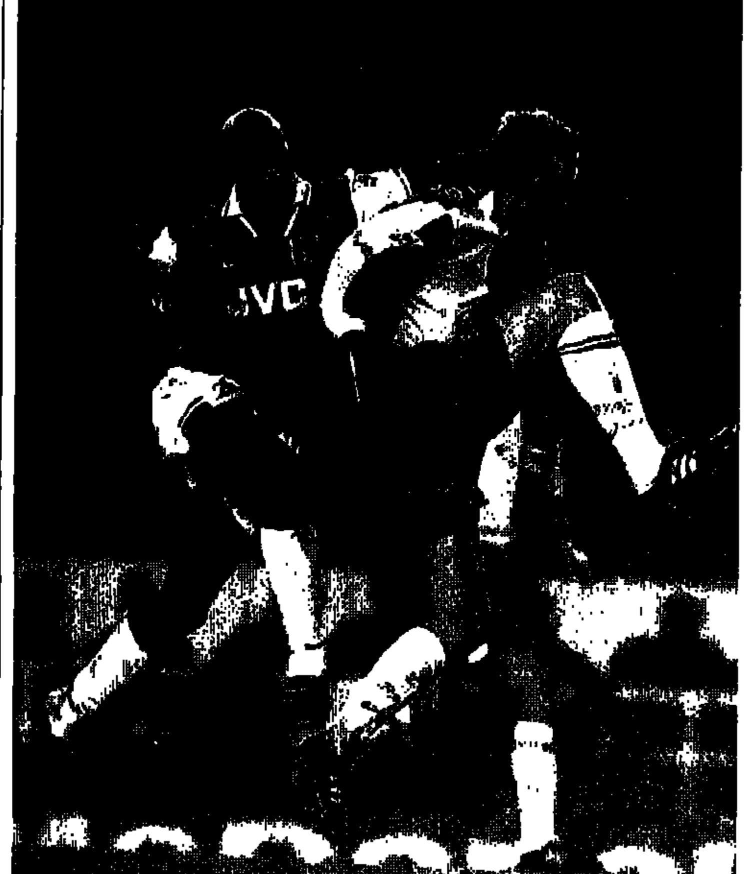
The striker says he was shouting at Blackburn fans taunting him about Arsenal's defeat and also his booking, which triggers a two-match suspension.

Whatever his understanding, Wright's behaviour was inexcusable and could leave him open to an FA charge of bringing the game into disrepute. It certainly blows a credibility hole through his rage counselling.

However, the red mist's reappearance did provide a graphic illustration of the changing atmosphere in the Arsenal camp as the team slipped to fifth in the table after being top in October.

The prospect of another title contest involving Blackburn and Manchester United shows that there is life after Kenny Dalglish at Ewood Park. But trying to find any meaningful life after George Graham at Arsenal is proving a trickier feat of resuscitation.

The team are spluttering for power like a car with a loose plug lead. The recent loss for three games of two of the side's most influential players — Dennis Bergkamp, suspended, and Patrick Vieira, injured — has disturbed the team's early momentum, but last Saturday's performance and the previous home game against Liverpool, which Arsenal also lost, pose deeper questions about the Arsène Wenger revolution.



Poor finish . . . Wright tangles with Stephane Henchoz on another frustrating day for the striker PHOTO: ROSS KINNAIRD

Changing the team's preferred method of forward motion from long ball to short was a laudable aim, but Wenger is having to face the fact that he is short of players capable of playing that way consistently enough to challenge for honours.

The team's shortcomings were exposed at Highbury by a high-tempo game in which Blackburn closed down space and options with suffocating consistency. Their captain Colin Hendry said: "We sat on them everywhere. We won every individual battle."

But too many Arsenal players — Lee Dixon, David Platt, Ray Parlour, Wright — lacked the quality of first touch, passing and movement off the ball required to outwit close marking. As a result, "we gave too many balls away," said Wenger, "and every lapse was punished".

And, though Arsenal matched Rovers' physical effort for an hour, even that drained away. Worryingly, Arsenal's scoring record in their last eight league games now reads: 0, 0, 0, 3, 0, 0, 1, 1.

Tim Flowers's only worry was of his own making, when he left his line too early and helped Marc Overmars put Arsenal ahead on 18 minutes. It was not the only international lapse the watching England coach Glenn Hoddle mentally filed away. Just before half-time Tony Adams nearly presented Blackburn with a goal by getting caught in possession. Then, on 60 minutes, he miskicked a routine clearance straight to Jeff Kenna, whose cross was eventually converted by Jason Wilcox.

Blackburn's second was a wonder goal struck on the volley from the left of the area by Kevin Gallacher, who had another effort cleared off the line, as did Chris Sutton, and Tim Sherwood also hit the bar before scoring Rovers' third.

It left Wenger admitting: "This performance was not good enough. I could get mad, but my task is to find an answer." He said he was considering signing new players. Perhaps he could get Ian Wright a new brain while he is at it.

● Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, urged clubs not to terminate the contracts of players who fail drug tests. It follows Charlton's sacking of their 21-year-old defender Jamie Stuart, who tested positive for cocaine and marijuana last month.

Cryptic crossword by Chifonie

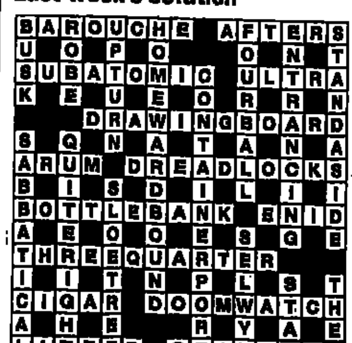
Across

1 This sort of day embarrassed the landlord (3-6)
6 Some people imbibe an orange liqueur at a jollification (5)
9 Go with people (heartless types) and rent large shop (10,5)
10 Love English banker (4)
11 Pretentious café with deft renovation (8)
14 Kill deprived child with iodine instead of a natural painkiller (9)
15 Hardy cultivated monster (5)
16 Spiritual benefactor that is after information (5)
18 Decide beforehand leftie is to accept alternative when in agony (9)
20 Noble rank accepts black intellectual (8)
21 Priest decapitated pack animal (4)
25 Trek all night in a novel attempt at solving problem (7,8)
26 A virtuous person eats small pudding (5)
27 To reduce rapid eye movement put in suitable surroundings (9)

Down

1 Dangerous gas causing commotion in the navy (5)
2 Spotted fruit being eaten by theologian (7)
3 We hear lackey betrays aristocrat (4)
4 Spell a sentence (4)
5 Circus tot is usually third on the left (4,6)
6 Lizzie traps fool with gold obtaining new instrument (6,4)
7 Chose a couple of days to shelter disorderly poet (7)
8 Traced — in red? (9)
12 Tip of rosemary put in fresh vegetable for marine (5,5)
13 Betrays drunk — the worse for exposure (10)
14 Chicks' flimsy coverings invoke urges he'll suppress initially (9)
17 Close to fastening chick's flimsy covering (7)
19 Mineral, a small lump, found in island excavation initially (7)
22 Disturbed gnats create worry (5)
23 Stylish Greek character's cold (4)
24 Previously attached to the church (4)

Last week's solution



Rugby Union

Injured Jones unlikely to play again

Paul Rees

THE Wales captain Gwyn Jones is unlikely to play again after suffering a serious spinal cord injury 10 minutes into the match between Cardiff and Swansea at the Arms Park last Saturday in the Welsh National League Premier Division.

The 25-year-old Cardiff wing forward, who earlier this year suspended his medical studies to pursue a career as a professional rugby player, was hurt after he became trapped in a ruck.

His body became limp and he lay motionless on the ground as play continued. Jones told the Cardiff physiotherapist he thought he had broken his neck and, after doctors were summoned, play was held up for five minutes while his neck was put in a brace and he was eased on to a stretcher.

Doctors at Cardiff Royal Infirmary diagnosed that Jones's spinal cord had been compressed and that he had lost movement in his arms and legs. He was later placed in the care of a neurosurgeon at the University Hospital of Wales, from where his family issued a statement later. "His neck is not broken, his condition is stable and emergency surgery is not contemplated," it said. "In the acute phase of such an injury it is impossible to predict the long-term outcome. However, there has been some improvement since his admission."

A hospital spokesman said Jones would be in their care "for a while". It may be weeks before he knows whether he will be able to walk again.

This is the most serious in a long line of injuries suffered by the flanker, who missed two seasons earlier this decade after shoulder operations.

Jones was joined in hospital by the Swansea hooker Garin Jenkins' father, who suffered a heart attack an hour into the match and collapsed on the terraces. Jenkins was told of his father's condition by a policeman as he was preparing to throw the ball into a line-out and vaulted over the railings to comfort his mother while his father was carried into an ambulance. Ivor Jenkins, who had heart by-pass surgery last summer, was later said to be in a stable condition.

The incidents cast a shadow over a fractious match between the league's top two teams which Swansea won 31-22.

"I have never known a match like it," said Cardiff's former Wales captain Mike Hall. "The players are numb with shock. It puts everything into perspective. We lost the match, but so what? We are all thinking of Gwyn and Garin."

"Gwyn's injury and the illness of Garin's father took the gloss off our victory," Swansea's coach John Plumtree added. "Our thoughts are with them both."

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Aung San Suu Kyi: Burma's military leaders 'want us gagged, bound and impotent'

Military junta turns on itself as the Burmese economy sinks

Suzanne Goldenberg has an exclusive meeting with Burma's opposition leader in Rangoon

BURMA'S military junta, shunned by the West and cast adrift by the financial turmoil affecting its Asian neighbours, has placed five high-ranking ministers under house arrest in an anti-corruption drive intended to revive the economy and repair its image.

But the junta is as determined as ever to hang on to power and rebuff pressure for democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), told the Guardian in an exclusive interview at her home in Rangoon, which is cordoned off by police and watched over by informers.

She spoke days after several of her colleagues were sentenced to lengthy jail terms and the authorities accused the NLD of scaring away foreign investors. "I don't know if they are nervous, but they certainly seem as if they are on the defensive," Ms Suu Kyi said of the junta. "Why else would they say it is the NLD's fault that foreign investment is not coming in?"

Six NLD leaders were summoned to a meeting with the home minister last week from which Ms Suu Kyi was excluded. "They said they were a military government and they were not going to bring in democracy yet. They said they don't like us giving out statements, and that action could be taken against us," she said. "They want us gagged, bound and impotent."

Ms Suu Kyi was freed from house arrest in July 1995, but her movements are restricted. Though she meets diplomats regularly, the regime has thwarted efforts to rally her followers, by arrests and by breaking up meetings. Her husband, the Oxford academic Michael Aris, and their younger son Kim, aged 20, were refused visas to visit her this Christmas.

Ms Suu Kyi suggested the anti-corruption drive would make little difference. "It strengthens our resolve because we know the economy won't improve until there is a democracy which makes use of the talent inside the country instead of crushing it in the name of security, which really means the perpetuation of their own power."

However, thousands of Ms Suu Kyi's followers have given up their NLD membership to avoid interrogation or jail. "Our people are too scared," said a former supporter who resigned after more than four years in prison.

Five ministers — high-ranking officers — were sacked last month. They have been placed under house arrest, and their advisers detained. The children of the errant generals, the chief beneficiaries of a regime that has developed a taste for the high life, have had their passports confiscated. The authorities have seized businesses, padlocking a well-known Rangoon nightclub — Mr Guitar — operated by the commerce minister's daughter.

Until the collapse of the Southeast Asian economies, Burma's generals and their cronies among civilian businessmen had revelled in a building boom that within the past 18 months has transformed a charming, albeit crumbling, colonial capital into a city of faceless luxury hotels.

Some hotels and construction firms were owned outright by the military's holding company; others were private ventures with Southeast Asian firms and the generals' children and friends. For the cronies, the hotels fleshed out portfolios that extended to banks, ruby mines, bus companies and water treatment plants.

The economic free-for-all that began eight years ago when Burma threw open its doors to private enterprise and foreign investment may be ending. Austerity is the mood of the moment. Ministers no longer have motorcades and have been told to observe traffic rules. The importation of spare car parts — the élite favours Audis — has been banned to save dwindling foreign exchange reserves as the Burmese kyat plummeted — down from 315 to 395 to the dollar in the past week.

Observers in Rangoon estimate that inflation is running at 10 per cent a month, inflicting further misery in a country where a government doctor earns 1,600 kyat a month, and a traffic policeman barely 1,000 kyat.

Burma ranks 133 out of 174 on the United Nations' human development index. Since 1988 the regime has spent more than 60 per cent of the budget on a swollen army.

A tourist boom, which the government predicted would follow Visit Myanmar Year (the new name for Burma) in 1996, never materialised. Neither did the prosperity that Burma believed would follow its entry into the Asean trading bloc in May. "All hotels are hurting mightily, and those under construction have slowed down. Singaporean investors are really crying," said a foreign observer in Rangoon.

The International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Asian Development Bank will not step in to help the military junta so long as it resists moves towards democracy or dialogue with Ms Suu Kyi.

IMF warning, page 14

UK Cabinet split over benefit cuts

Ewen MacAskill

ENRAGED British ministers vented their spleen against the Education Secretary, David Blunkett, this week after a leaked letter from him on disability cuts exposed the biggest split yet in Tony Blair's Cabinet.

The UK Treasury, which set in motion the welfare review, was seething about Mr Blunkett, whose letter expressed "grave anxiety" that disabled people might lose benefits. It played down the letter as a gross over-reaction to a proposal unlikely to happen.

In a sign of the emotions that the leak has aroused, a minister from Labour's modernising wing contemptuously dismissed Mr Blunkett as "weaving" on the issue of welfare reform rather than saying directly what he thought.

The Prime Minister was said to be unhappy that the leaked letter had swamped his own speech last Saturday about welfare reform. But he used the row to reiterate that he and his modernising colleagues would not be deflected. Mr Blair said the welfare system was not working and needed reform. "We will do it fairly. We will do it sensitively — but we will do it," he said.

Although Mr Blunkett insisted last Sunday that he was a moderniser, his uncompromising opposition to disability cuts puts him alongside Labour traditionalists such as John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, who have watched in alarm proposals taking shape in the Treasury and the Department of Social Security.

Mr Blair, Chancellor Gordon Brown and Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, are determined to push through the reform, believing welfare eats up too much of the UK budget and that money should be switched to education and health.

Mr Blair said: "Change is always hard and I know there will be a lot of difficulties, but we have to stand firm because at the moment we are going to spend, just on benefits, more than we spend on our schools, our hospitals and our communities put together."

His refusal to rule out changes in disability benefit is playing badly in many parts of the Labour party, still smouldering over the lone parent benefits cut. A minister on the traditional wing of the party said: "I hope they will have the sense to stop this or they will rip the party apart."

Mr Blunkett, who is blind, said in the leaked letter to the Chancellor, said: "Deep cuts in the totality of support for those disabled people who either cannot work or can only find very modestly-paid work would make a mockery of our professions on social exclusion and the construction of a more just society."



David Blunkett: 'grave anxiety'

The letter, written on December 9, the day before the Labour revolt on the lone parent benefits cut, was written in response to proposals emerging from a committee of officials from Downing Street, the Treasury and Social Security looking at welfare reform. The review is still at an early stage but trends should emerge early next year.

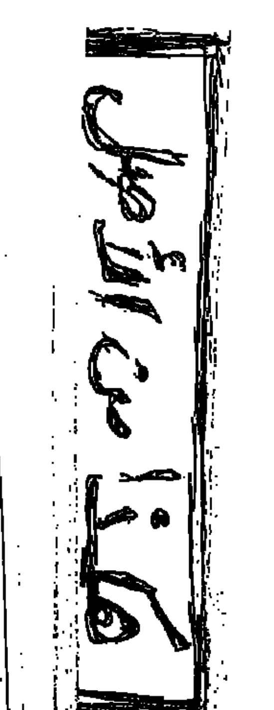
"I don't think there's a rift at all," Mr Blunkett said. "I think that all of us have got the same objectives, the principles spelt out by Tony Blair."

Campaigners for the disabled said the revelation of "outrageous" proposals meant the Government had no choice but to think again. They expressed resentment at the suggestion that they were spongers. Most were pensioners who are unable to work while others had disabilities so severe they could not work either.

Members of the Disabled People's Direct Action Network propose to beg from the public in Whitehall to highlight the impact of benefit cuts on disabled people.

Because of distribution problems over the holiday season, we are publishing next week's issue with this one

Austria	AS30	Malta	60c
Belgium	BF80	Netherlands	G 5
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 450	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,500	Switzerland	SF 3.80



Genetic advances put more food on the table

YOUR reporters' warning that genetically engineered food could lead to mass unemployment among farmers and the collapse of export markets in the Third World (A $400bn gamble with the world's food, December 21) is surely something we should celebrate, not fear.

In Britain, advances in agricultural technology mean that most of us have escaped the back-breaking drudgery of a subsistence lifestyle and replaced it with the infinitely more rewarding pleasures of urbanisation.

If genetic engineering can increase yields, improve nutritional content and reduce the labour required to put dinner on the table, then that can only be a good thing. Denying modern technology to those who need it is a sure-fire way of perpetuating the deprivation that agrarian societies have to live through.

Paul Bryan,
Birmingham

YOU are right to highlight the impact of genetically modified food and biotechnology — but I suspect you are too late. The European Parliament was under huge pressure to approve a European Union-wide biotechnology patent directive. It is the only EU-wide patent legislation, it will bypass national patenting legislation and, in one swoop, the debate on biotechnology in Europe will be effectively at an end.

David Hallam, MEP,
Bridgnorth, Sallop

OUR members are well-versed in the ethical and consumer arguments surrounding genetically modified food, but the rest of the public is in virtual ignorance, especially of the fact that, with 60 per cent of processed food containing soya, they effectively have no choice.

Consumer choice has to be respected and protected by biotechnology companies, food manufacturers, farmers and the British government. Townswomen will continue to fight the propaganda and demand labelling and well-balanced information.

Iris Shanahan,
Townswomen's Guilds,
Edgbaston, West Midlands

IT IS vital that European political will is more successful in resisting this cultural import from the United States than it has been in the past. There is more at stake this time.

Brian Pilling,
Barrowford, Nelson

A climate for change

THE United States and Australia have evaded their international responsibilities in failing to respond adequately to the 60 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions called for by the UN International Panel on Climate Change (Kyoto fails test on climate crisis, December 14).

Ironically, greenhouse gas reduction targets may be overshadowed by resource depletion early in the coming century. The independent petrochemical consultants Campbell and Laherreres have studied the performance history of 40,000 oil wells in 65 oil-producing countries. Their findings indicate that oil production, and new discoveries have already peaked and are likely to halve over the next 25 years, despite increasing demand.

Whether driven by resource depletion or by serious attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the impact on high-energy industrialised countries will be profound. Amongst the required changes will be the demise of the consumer ethic, a reduction in mobility, particularly in regard to air and car transport, shifts to smaller-scale, labour-intensive economies and political devolution. The impact of change may be eased by the transitional use of natural gas and urgently required research and development into renewable energy technologies.

Although apparently disastrous to economic rationalism, a shift to lower-energy societies could carry several benefits for human well-being. Most important of all would be the recognition that sustainability of human societies into the next century depends on reciprocal relationships with, and responsibilities towards, the rest of the natural world, which have been characteristic of indigenous communities for millennia.

Bryan Furnass,
Canberra, Australia

FROM all the accusations levelled at the US in the debate over global warming, one would conclude that Americans are all hedonistic gluttons, while the rest of the world consists of guiltless ascetics whose ecological consciences are clean. The US does indeed waste energy, but this is in part due to the way the country has developed, with far too many people living in free-standing single-family houses — the most inefficient kind of dwelling — and with far too many cars needed to get to these houses, which are beyond the reach of mass-transit. This kind of development is not unique to the US, however, and I don't believe life in general is much different for Canadians, Australians or New Zealanders — or, for that matter, people in the Gulf countries, who are extravagant wasters of their cheap energy.

The US has a much higher population than any of these countries, which accounts for its higher percentage contribution to greenhouse gases. The US is currently the fastest-growing developed country; since this population growth comes mostly from immigration, and since more people will surely mean more pollution, shouldn't other countries at the Kyoto conference have asked for the US to cut immigration as well as greenhouse gases?

Paul Tetrault,
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Millions to the rescue

THE juxtaposition of two headlines on the front page of the December 7 issue prompts a challenge to Edgar Bronfman and the World Jewish Congress. That the Swiss "must pay millions" in redemption seems just on the record, but that the proceeds should be "distributed to Holocaust survivors" is much less clear. Why shouldn't the millions seed a Jewish initiative for the African orphans of Aids whose catastrophe is delineated on the same front page?

Granted that the illegitimacy of the Swiss banks' position overrides the contestable status of Mr Bronfman as trustee of Holocaust survivors; the question remains whether that trusteeship does not entail fiduciary obligations to mitigate burgeoning injustices, such as world neglect of Aids-devastated African children, rather than to ease the burden on Jewish charitable organisations already sufficiently endowed to meet the dwindling responsibilities of caring for Holocaust survivors. In short, I think that here is an opportunity — perhaps an obligation — for Jewish organisations to act righteously in the world beyond the confines of the Jewish community.

The rhetorical state of any question about Jewish claims after the Holocaust unfortunately obliges me to show the scars that entitle me to speak. I am an escapee of the Holocaust, born in 1930 in Leipzig in a family of East European Jews and accidentally able to emigrate to the United States in March 1940. My parents were poor, but my close relatives included individuals, all murdered, whose names could easily appear on one or another of the lists from Switzerland.

There is a library of books about the Holocaust bearing titles of outrage, such as While The World Watched. Now the world is watching again. Why should the saving exceptions be limited to the remnants of Christian missionary organisations? That is my question to Mr Bronfman and the World Jewish Congress.

David Kettler,
Rhinebeck, New York, USA

GOLD residue from the Nazi era could defuse some landmines, or give a few villages a bit of fresh water. In this way, Holocaust survivors could show the world what they themselves were denied — the support and sympathy of their fellow man.

Diana Hanaor,
Haifa, Israel

Along with me, myself and I

A WOMAN is so desperate for children that she risks a multiple pregnancy and gives birth to septuplets, who will undoubtedly suffer physically and psychologically for her decision (When a miracle loses its shine, November 30). A wealthy career woman leaves home at 6.30 in the morning and only sometimes gets back in time to put her two small children to bed (Transatlantic high flier, November 30). Single women are selecting unknown donor fathers from sperm banks on the basis of their height and hair colour. A professional man I know rejects his wife and new-born son and goes into therapy to confront the traumas of his childhood.

We are not talking of the parents who are so desperate that they sell their children into sex or slavery, but of parents in a "me" generation who are putting their own emotional needs before those of their children. Psychoanalysis dwells on the damage done to our own personalities — invariably by parents — but, ironically, has done nothing to create a responsible attitude towards our children. In rearing a new generation with absent or non-existent parents we may be creating a social time bomb. It's a risky experiment, and one the world can do without.

Lucy Trench,
Prague, Czech Republic

Briefly

WOULD the Guardian Weekly ask a fox to review a book titled The Lives Of Chickens? It asked Laura Cumming to review Alfred C Kinsey: A Public/Private Life (November 23) and the result has been unfortunate, sex as sniffed from a nunnery! ". . . Kinsey perverted the research; thus . . . a generation of perverts was born" trills Ms Cumming in a warble of nonsense. She was surprised that "at eight, he [Kinsey] was examining other boys' genitals". Of course he was. What does she think boys normally do? Ms Cumming has poured moral syrup over sex research to hide it and hoped instead we would all see the pretty flowers.

Lewis Coopersmith,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

MARTIN WOOLLACOTT says that Wall Street brokers didn't "wing past the windows this time" as they seemed to have lost nothing (December 7). The real reason those greedy chaps didn't jump in October is that it is impossible to open the windows in the modern New York skyscraper. Many lives have been saved since that other October in 1929 by the design of those hermetically sealed glass boxes of corporate assertion.

William O Moeser,
Springfield, Vermont, USA

WHAT on earth are "spin doctors" (December 14)? Some new cricketing advisory board? Or a new terrible tabloid tongue twister to test our tottering tolerance?

Owen Finch,
Landsborough, Queensland, Australia

BEFORE your correspondent Peter Llewellyn (November 23) and others become overexcited about the prospect of a 24-cent business fax from Dar es Salaam to London, I recommend two restraining considerations. First, the level playing field is only useful to those who want to play the game in question; even those who are not unusually prevented by the entry fee. And second, there is a remark attributed to Thoreau when told that Boston had been connected to Texas by telegraph: "How wonderful! But what was it precisely that we wanted to say to Texas?"

Tony Simpson,
Wellington, New Zealand

THE House of Commons has reflected public opinion in its overwhelming vote against fox hunting (December 7). Yet the Government refuses to give support to any legislation and the opposition is determined to prevent further progress "by any means possible". Is this a democracy, or did I miss something?

Pete Foster,
Wilstone, Hertfordshire

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Dissident wins South Korea election

Andrew Higgins in Seoul

SOUTH KOREA last week ejected the governing party for the first time in half a century, handing a narrow victory to veteran dissident and former political prisoner Kim Dae-jung in presidential elections.

Mr Kim's win ends an era of machine politics and marks the first peaceful transfer of power to the opposition. The previous ouster of the ruling élite was brought about by a military coup in 1961 and paved the way for 30 years of military despotism.

The opposition triumph is likely to unsettle North Korea, where confrontation with South Korea has provided the Stalinist regime's only secure mooring. Mr Kim, of the National Congress for New Politics, has long urged warmer ties — a development that would undermine the last shreds of Pyongyang's ideology.

Mr Kim won with 40.3 per cent of the vote, just 1.6 percentage points more than the governing party candidate, Lee Hoi-chang. Despite his wafer-thin margin of victory, his opponents did not hesitate to concede. No major incidents marred voting, and the country accepted the outcome as fair.

There was a time not too long ago when the military might have intervened to prevent Mr Kim, long viewed as soft on communism, from claiming victory.

It took the 74-year-old four tries to win the presidency. Along the way he defied a succession of military strongmen, surviving assassination bids, a kidnapping and a death sentence. He is a consummate outsider — a Catholic in a land of Protestants and Buddhists, a veteran campaigner for democracy in a country dominated for decades by the military, the favourite son of the least favoured and poorest region.

He told his country's 46 million people to brace themselves for "pain, tears and toil", warning that his command of the state that once tried to kill him would provide no relief from the bitter free-market cure prescribed by the International Monetary Fund.

To calm unease among conservatives, he visited the national cemetery to pay respects to South Korea's war dead and sounded a tough note on defence, saying: "For national security, a powerful military has to exist." And the president-elect and the president agreed to free the disgraced former presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo in a dramatic effort to unite a nation in deep economic crisis.

The decision provoked immediate criticism from one of the country's leading human rights groups, which said there were still many prisoners of conscience still languishing in South Korea's jails.

Roh and Chun, who were released on Monday, were convicted of mutiny, treason and corruption in August 1996. In April, the Supreme Court upheld an appeals court decision to commute Chun's death sentence to life in jail and cut Roh's 22½ year sentence to 17 years. The ex-presidents were found guilty of taking bribes worth hundreds of millions of dollars while in office.

Martin Woollacott, page 8

Jamaica party wins a record third term

Agencies in Kingston

JAMAICA'S prime minister celebrated his party's unprecedented third straight election win last week with a pledge to end political violence. But while reggae music rang out at P J Patterson's victory rally, gunshots filled the air elsewhere in the capital.

Despite the fatal stabbing of a poll worker, five election-related shootings reported in Kingston, and numerous accusations of fraud, last week's elections were the most peaceful in decades.

Mr Patterson's People's National Party won 49 seats in the 60-seat parliament. The Jamaica Labour party, led by the former prime minister, Edward Seaga, won 10.

"I regard this [victory] as a clear signal . . . that the country wants an end to political violence," Mr Patterson, aged 62, told jubilant supporters. "I hope that tonight we are not only turning a page but opening a brand new and exciting chapter in the annals of Jamaican politics," he said.

But while he spoke, gunfire erupted in southwest Kingston, where armed troops and police confronted flaming roadblocks built by supporters of the defeated Jamaica Labour party, who were protesting at the stabbing.

The 67-year-old Mr Seaga, leader of the conservative party since 1974 and prime minister from 1980-89, conceded defeat within hours of polls closing.

The election also brought defeat to the National Democratic Movement of Bruce Golding, the first time a third party has competed in a Jamaican election. Golding lost his seat in parliament.

Before the election, Mr Patterson's party had 51 seats, Mr Seaga's had seven, and Mr Golding's — which broke away from Labour in a crisis over Mr Seaga's leadership two years ago — had two.

● The Jamaican government will come under increasing pressure from Britain to improve conditions for death row prisoners as part of negotiations over the cancellation of a nearly $100 million debt. Clare Short, Britain's International Development Secretary, has promised to pursue human rights concerns with the Caribbean island.



A performance artist walks past an Aboriginal painting in Sydney's New South Wales gallery PHOTO: DAVID GRAY

Aborigines get no official apology

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

THE Australian government last week refused to either apologise to or compensate the "Stolen Generation" Aborigines in its official response to a human rights commission report on past policies of breaking up indigenous families.

The Aboriginal affairs minister, John Herron, unveiled a four-year, $50 million package to help reunite Aborigines taken from their parents under the now-discredited policy of assimilation.

Senator Herron said that he and the prime minister, John Howard, had expressed deep sorrow about the actions of federal and state governments and churches, which continued into the 1960s, but there would be no formal apology.

The package was the government's response to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission report, Bringing Them Home. The report included several accounts of babies being forcibly removed to white homes to improve their health care and education.

Aboriginal leaders said the lack of an apology and compensation would delay reconciliation between blacks and whites.

The Aboriginal social justice commissioner, Mick Dodson, said: "Of course the financial initiatives are welcomed, but they are diminished by the silence and stubbornness in relation to other matters, in particular the apology."

Lois O'Donoghue, the former chair of Atsic, the Aboriginal parliament, who was taken from her parents, said it was a day of shame and national disgrace.

Meanwhile a damaging split between the states emerged last week in the election of delegates to a convention that will decide whether Australia drops the Queen as head of state.

While republicans were tipped to win the majority of seats for the February summit, constitutional monarchists have polled well in states with sparsely populated rural areas.

Nigeria 'coup plot' foiled

NIGERIA'S military government on Monday said it had foiled a plot to overthrow General Sani Abacha, led by his deputy, amid reports of gunfire in the capital, Abuja, *writes Chris McGreal.*

The army gave few details in a statement read on television. But it said Gen Abacha's number two, Lieutenant-General Oladipo Diya, nine other officers — including former cabinet ministers — and one civilian were arrested.

If the account is accurate, the plot represents the most serious threat to Gen Abacha's four-year rule since an alleged coup attempt in 1995 by one of the most prominent former military rulers, General Olusegun Obasanju.

But an apparent attempt to kill Gen Diya last week, together with the death in custody of another prominent military officer and the ethnic origin of most of those detained, raises the possibility of a purge by Gen Abacha. Nigeria's strongman, who has recently denied that he is suffering from a life-threatening disease, has proved ruthless in crushing dissent.

Last Sunday night residents of Abuja reported hearing gunfire from around the area which houses Gen Abacha's and Gen Diya's residences. However, Nigeria's largest city, Lagos, remained quiet and there were no reports of large troop movements.

"In its statement, the army attempted to reassure Nigerians that the coup had been crushed, and warned it would "strongly resist any attempt to undermine the security and integrity of the nation".

The Week

THE Turkish prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, said that Ankara would withdraw its application for full membership of the European Union in June unless the EU included Turkey in a list of candidate countries.

JANET JAGAN, aged 77, the US-born widow of Guyana's late leader Cheddi Jagan, was sworn in as the first woman president of the former British colony in only its second democratic election. She beat former President Desmond Hoyte.

SERBIA'S ruling Socialists declared that their candidate, Milan Milutinovic, had won against an ultra-nationalist challenger in presidential elections. But the oppositon candidate, Vojislav Seselj, and his Radicals accused the Socialists of fraud and said the turnout was below the requisite 50 per cent.

SIX Egyptian police officers accused of negligence after last month's massacre of tourists in Luxor, including the former police chief and his deputy, went before disciplinary councils.

A DISTRICT judge in the US awarded the families of three Cuban-American pilots more than $187 million in damages against the Havana government for the deaths of the men, who were shot down by a Cuban jetfighter in 1996.

IRAQ, attempting to prove it hides no prohibited weapons, took Western journalists to so-called presidential sites that it has declared off-limits to United Nations inspectors.

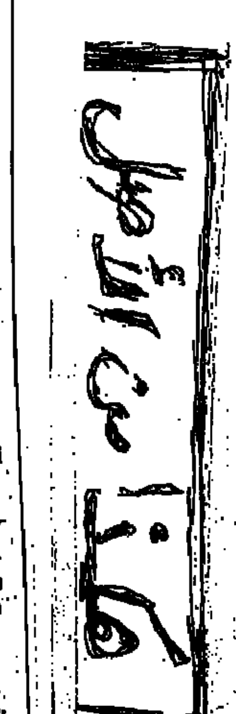
AIR crash experts from the US were due to arrive in Indonesia to help in the investigation into the crash of a SilkAir Boeing 737-300 in Sumatra, in which 104 people died.

CHARITY NGILU, a strong presidential contender against Daniel arap Moi in Kenya's elections on December 29, was tear-gassed by police in Kisii as she addressed supporters.

HUNDREDS of Japanese children were taken to hospitals after watching a popular cartoon on television. They were said to have complained of feeling ill, eye irritation and loss of vision when a character flashed its eyes.

VINCENT "The Chin" Gigante, the Mafia "Oddfather" who escaped prosecution for years by wandering the streets of New York in a scruffy bathrobe like a madman, was sent to prison for 12 years.

THE Japanese film director Juzo Itami, aged 64, committed suicide in Tokyo. Itami made internationally renowned films such as Tampopo and Minbo No Onna.



Notes of discord as bell tolls for Mandela

David Beresford and Angella Johnson in Johannesburg

AS PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela handed over the party reins to Thabo Mbeki at last week's ANC congress in Mafikeng, he ushered in a new era in South African politics with warning bells.

The message was clear: to all intents and purposes, Mr Mandela has been consigned to history. The reign of the great man is over.

The week-long conference was dominated by his Enemies Of Change speech, an extraordinary five-hour opening address. Although he delivered it, there was little doubt that it was largely written — or at least inspired — by his successor.

Apparently designed to set the tone for the new Mbeki administration, it was presumed to have been given to Mr Mandela to deliver on the grounds that his stature would protect him from too much criticism, as well as suggesting a continuity of leadership.

As it was, even the respect shown by South Africans for their revered leader did not save the president from a savaging. The liberals denounced it as "unworthy" and "contemptible" and the Nationalists as evidence of "paranoia". The attacks were entirely predictable.

Telling the 3,000 delegates the revolution was not over, Mr Mandela warned of sinister forces bent on undermining South Africa's young democracy. He accused the media of conspiring with non-governmental organisations to undermine the black-led government, the private sector of perpetuating apartheid's patterns of ownership and economic control, and the main white opposition parties defending white privilege.

Perhaps the most startling aspect of the speech was his attack on unspecified non-governmental organisations, whom he accused of working to "corrode the influence of the liberation movement" and suggested they were acting as "instruments of foreign governments and institutions".

Coming from Mr Mandela — who has given his life to the cause of racial unity and has shown contempt for "populist" exploitation of black grievances — the speech was bewildering. But attributed to Mr Mbeki, the comments were more frightening than baffling, because they would seem to confirm the worst fears about South Africa's president-designate.

The reaction of white South Africa to the speech is best summed up by the political commentator, Lester Venter, author of a recently published best-seller, After Mandela Goes. He says the speech was a sign that the "rainbow nation" concept is fast unravelling.

Mr Venter argues that the ANC is looking for scapegoats to blame for its inability to transform the economy and society and to deliver jobs and homes to its constituency: "I must say, as a white, that his words are part of the new black cultural grammar that leaves me feeling even more alienated and marginalised."

There has been criticism of complacency within South Africa's white community, which suffers from a collective delusion that it has done enough by "allowing" majority rule.

This has been articulated recently by, among others, one of the ANC's most senior white members, Gill Marcus, the deputy finance minister, who warned that whites were spurning an historic second chance to mend fences with blacks.



Thabo Mbeki, left, the ANC's new leader, confers with President Mandela last week PHOTO: ADIL BRADLOW

But while the white community obviously needs to do more to compensate for the imbalances resulting from apartheid, it is questionable whether Mr Mbeki identifies as much with the deprived black masses as with the new black élite.

The outgoing treasurer-general, Makhenkesi Stofile, boasted to the conference that he had overseen a dramatic turnaround in party finances. He attributed it in part to the ANC's success as a "facilitator" to create opportunities for black business, which had resulted in rewards by way of donations to party coffers.

The identification of Mr Mbeki with well-heeled blacks accounts for what might otherwise be seen as disproportionate excitement over one development at the conference — the election of Patrick "Terror" Lekota to the part-time post of party chairman.

Last year Lekota was thrown out as premier of the Free State by the ANC's national leadership after he had accused members of his provincial cabinet of corruption. A politician whose commitment to racial unity rivals even that of Mr Mandela — he is reputed to have won the hearts of many notoriously conservative Free State farmers by keeping an Afrikaans Bible by his bed and showing an enthusiasm for rugby — he has emerged as the champion of an emerging leftwing bloc.

It is made up of the trade union movement and the South African Communist party, as well as members of the domestic anti-apartheid movement who have been marginalised by the ascendancy of Mr Mbeki and those like him who fought the National party government from exile.

South African commentators were describing Mr Lekota's comeback as the start of "a struggle for the soul of the ANC". It may also be described as a struggle against the philosophy implicit in Mr Mandela's identification of South Africa's supposed "enemies of change".

● Winnie Mandela, former wife of Mr Mandela, decided against standing for the post of ANC deputy president after being stymied by a rule change that raised the number of nominees she needed. However, she kept her post on the national executive committee, the ANC's leadership body, finishing in 15th place in voting among more than 150 candidates for 60 positions on the panel.

Washington Post, page 11

US acts to salvage Middle East peace

Ian Black, and David Sharrock in Jerusalem

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton is to throw his full weight behind attempts to shore up the faltering Middle East peace process in meetings with Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat next month.

Madeleine Albright, the United States secretary of state, said last week that she would recommend to the president that he meet the Israeli and Palestinian leaders separately in Washington after again failing herself to bridge yawning gaps between the two.

After talks with Mr Arafat in London, she said: "It is appropriate now for them to meet separately with the president and this is a sign of the seriousness of the discussions that are taking place." She said "very hard decisions" were necessary.

The British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, told the Palestinian leader that the peace process would be the top priority in European Union foreign policy during the six-month British presidency. He called on Israel to make "significant and substantial further redeployments" and reminded it of its obligations under the Oslo agreement.

Mr Arafat said: "We are passing through a very delicate moment, a very dangerous moment and a very important moment in history."

After nine months of deadlock in the Oslo talks, the US can do little but try to keep the show on the road. The plan for separate encounters underlines the extent to which relations have deteriorated since Mr Arafat's historic self-rule deal with Mr Netanyahu's murdered predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin, in 1993.

Accelerated Israeli settlement activities and attacks by Palestinian suicide bombers have brought deadlock over the next stage of the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, which is vital if talks are to begin on a final peace deal.

In one possible success, there were reports that the US had brokered an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on security co-operation — a crackdown on Islamist militants opposed to the peace process — though neither Mr Netanyahu nor Mr Arafat confirmed that it was a done deal.

The US will be the ultimate arbiter in decisions over which Islamist militants should be detained or freed as part of moves to put the Middle East peace process back on track, according to Israeli news reports last week.

The agreement, worked out by Palestinian, Israeli and US security officials, is aimed at assuaging fears that Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority rounds up extremists after major atrocities and then quietly releases them.

Mr Netanyahu said that any withdrawal from the West Bank would take place only after a five-month "testing period". His government would proceed only if the Palestinians proved that they were seriously cracking down on militants.

The Yediot Aharonot daily newspaper claimed that an agreement among the parties stipulates that the Palestinians will give the CIA representative in Israel advance notice of the names of detainees they plan to release.

The CIA will then inform Israel of impending releases, and Israel will be given an opportunity to voice objections. In the end, the Palestinian Authority can release detainees only with US approval, Yediot said.

A senior Palestinian security official refused to comment on the report. But Ahmed Abdel Rahman, the secretary-general of the Palestinian cabinet, said: "No one has veto power over the Palestinians, not the US and not Israel."

Mr Netanyahu said that he could not guarantee that his cabinet's deliberations on the scale of any pullback from the West Bank would be completed by the time he expects to meet Mr Clinton in January or February.

Asked about the wide gap between Palestinian demands for nearly all the West Bank and proposed Israeli maps that would leave at least half the territory in Israeli hands, Mr Netanyahu said: "You know, there are other maps . . . I think it is possible to create something that works for both parties."

'No exit' for troops in Bosnia

Martin Walker in Brussels

NATO began drafting a plan last week for a long-haul military commitment to Bosnia with a slimmed-down force remaining indefinitely, but the United States secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, warned that for the US to stay the course, its European allies "must do much, much more".

However, beyond building an extra courtroom for the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague, there was no hint of any renewed determination to arrest the remaining war criminals, nor to press the French to pursue arrests in their zone.

The new slimline force, which is expected to comprise fewer than 20,000 troops, will have no exit date, though the mission will be reviewed every six months. It now appears probable that the Nato mission in Bosnia will continue into the next millennium.

"The United States will continue to do its share," Mrs Albright said. But in roles such as policing, she added, "other members of the alliance need to do much, much more".

President Bill Clinton flew to Bosnia this week, beginning the political campaign to keep US troops engaged after the Stabilisation Force (S-For) mandate runs out in June. A US commander is seen as vital for congressional approval, despite French — and other — reservations.

"If there is to be a mission after the S-For mission expires, it must also have a clear-objective component," Mr Clinton said. "I still don't believe there should be anybody interested in some kind of a permanent stationing of global military presence all over Bosnia."

Blurring the national zones would point a way out of the row between France and the chief prosecutor of the war crimes tribunal, Louise Arbour. The Canadian judge claimed the French sector had become a "safe zone" for war criminals.

Privately, there was some backing for Ms Arbour's stand at Nato headquarters, which is sceptical of France's claim to have 3,500 troops in S-For. S-For estimates the contribution to be nearer the Spanish and German contingents of little more than 2,000.

Other Nato sources commented on the defensive role of US troops, which travel in convoy and avoid contact with locals — measures designed to preclude the political storm that casualties would provoke.

Le Monde, page 9
Washington Post, page 12

Mugabe runs short of money

Chris McGreal in Harare

TO ROBERT MUGABE it is the "unholy alliance". But Zimbabwe's president has done more than he cares to admit to forge the unlikely consensus that exists between Zimbabwe's newly assertive trade unions, which brought the country to a halt this month, and white farmers, whose domination of the land appears doomed by impending nationalisation.

Mr Mugabe has even managed to incur the wrath of the soldiers who fought the liberation war that put him in power 17 years ago.

The champion of Zimbabwe's increasingly poor urban population is Morgan Tsvangirai, secretary general of the Zimbabwe Confederation of Trade Unions (ZCTU).

ZCTU's general strike was called against tax rises. But underlying it was exasperation at unemployment, rising food costs, corruption and a belief that the government has no idea how to run an economy.

The police responded by beating and teargassing protesters in Harare. Two days later, Mr Tsvangirai was bludgeoned senseless by a group of thugs who broke into his office — an attack he blames on the home affairs minister and police commissioner.

The crisis evolved out of the grievances of liberation war veterans who were incensed at the government's repeated failure to honour its promises of cash. The situation worsened after the administration was forced to admit that a fund set up to compensate ex-combatants was plundered by senior party and state officials. For weeks, the veterans demanded a meeting with their former commander. Mr Mugabe stalled until the ex-soldiers took to the streets.

Shortly after eventually meeting the veterans, Mr Mugabe promised a $265 million package to placate them. His problem, however, was how to pay for it. And his solution was to impose tax increases without consulting parliament or the ruling Zanu-PF politburo. Zimbabwe's hard-pressed workers revolted with the ZCTU-led general strike.

In the face of massive popular dissent, both the ruling party and parliament, usually a rubber stamp, rejected the tax rises. And the government withdrew all but one, for a sales tax rise, which the ZCTU plans to challenge in the new year.

Widespread discontent has drawn the unions into common cause with others, including employers, who encouraged workers to join the protest, and white Zimbabweans, whose farms are threatened with seizure. Mr Mugabe's pledge to redistribute 12.3 million acres of mainly white-owned land has won acclaim among the dispossessed rural population for addressing a legacy of colonisation. But the ZCTU questions the government's motives and methods.

● A Zimbabwean high court sentenced the veteran opposition leader Ndabaningi Sithole to two years in jail last week for plotting to kill Mr Mugabe in 1995. Sithole, aged 77, appealed against the conviction and sentence and was released on bail after his lawyers argued he was too ill to go to prison. He insists he was framed by Mr Mugabe through Zimbabwe's secret service.

When Helmut sniffed, the EU caught a cold

The Year in Europe

Martin Walker

THE MOST important event of the European year took place in Amsterdam last June, when Germany's chancellor, Helmut Kohl, went to the lavatory. His foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, briefly took his chair, and innocently approved new clauses in the draft Treaty of Amsterdam which said that henceforth matters concerning the environment, culture and some industrial policy could be agreed by a majority vote of the council, rather than require unanimity.

When Kohl returned to his seat, he instantly disavowed these votes, and insisted that Germany would not accept this extension of the system of majority voting. Hans van Mierlo, the Dutch foreign minister, was so outraged (at the end of an exhausting day) that he threatened to punch Kinkel on the nose before being calmed down. Perhaps the story has grown with the telling. But it was quite a moment, for three separate yet linked reasons.

First, it reminded the rest of Europe that the German government, and indeed its political system, has become a benevolent dictatorship, in which Kohl has so effectively cut down any potential rival in his own coalition that his word is absolute. Second, it signalled that this wholly justified sway (after Kohl's adroit unification of Germany following the breach in the Berlin Wall) is coming under threat from a new direction. Kohl is not menaced by any single politician, but by a wider political reaction against his power. Germany's federal regions, the Länder, had insisted that Germany's national right of veto be upheld to prevent Brussels from imposing its policies upon the regional barons.

But the real significance of Kohl's intervention was that the rest of Europe saw, for perhaps the first time, the arrival of a Germany that can say No. Majority voting had hitherto been the chief institutional reform Kohl had pursued. Moreover Germany has traditionally played the role of conciliator in Europe, the rich uncle who solves the family's problems by peeling off deutschmarks from the fattest wad on the continent.

But even rich uncles get weary. Germany is forking out a grand total of $1,000 billion (a figure not far short of Britain's GDP this year) in the uphill task of absorbing former East Germany into the wealth and prosperity of the West. The limit of German generosity has been reached, and perhaps even surpassed, given that unemployment is now touching 12 per cent. And as the cruel cliché has it, the last time the Germans had unemployment at this level, they voted for Adolf Hitler. Everything else that has mattered this year has been about Germany's tough choice between its bone-deep determination to be a model European state, and the political costs of being Europe's banker of last resort. Next year sees a German general election.

As a result of Kohl's decision to balk at radical EU reform, the Amsterdam treaty, intended as Europe's third towering structure alongside the Rome and Maastricht treaties, failed to achieve glorious heights.

Peter Sutherland, the former European Commissioner who oversaw the Gatt system as it transformed itself into the World Trade Organisation, said that Amsterdam was supposed to achieve three goals: "To give the Union greater capacity for external action; to prepare the Union for the challenge of enlargement; and to make the EU more relevant to its citizens. In the event, the first two objectives were not achieved and the third only partly achieved." In short, when Germany says No, not much gets done.

By contrast, Germany has said Yes to a single currency for Europe, the euro. Even the once-hostile opinion polls are shifting in favour as the economic recovery starts to take hold and more Germans accept that their political and industrial élites have already made up their minds. The imminence of the euro has already achieved an almost miraculous convergence of most European economies. Their levels of shrinking budget deficits and their interest and inflation rates have all come so close that only Greece, alone of the 15 member states, would not qualify to join the euro under the criteria set at Maastricht. The price, in unemployment and in forgone growth as a result of stern fiscal discipline, has been steep.

There is now little doubt that the euro will go ahead on time, in January 1999, and that in May next year, 11 countries — Britain, Denmark, Sweden and Greece are those left out of the first wave — will formally sign up and align their exchange rates. There will clearly be a two-tier Europe, at least until the Outs join the single currency, which will be useful practice for the coming of the three-tier Europe, which is likely to follow the EU's enlargement into Eastern Europe.

Enlargement was another matter that was supposed to have been settled this year, but was not. After a long gestation the Commission in July produced its formal recommendation that six states were ready to start entry negotiations, while five were not. The six chosen nations were Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia and Cyprus. The five excluded, at least initially, were Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania.

It is widely suspected that the real motive for Spain, Portugal and Greece to oppose the idea of all 11 putative candidates starting entry negotiations at the same time is to delay the accession of any new members at all. For these poorer members, who are massive net beneficiaries of the EU's largess, more means less. The more new members, the less money for them, now that the Germany has closed its wallet and said that enlargement must be funded from existing budgets.

There is a striking contrast between the disarray that has marked the EU enlargement process and the brisk and efficient way the Nato alliance set about expanding itself to include the Czechs, Hungarians and Poles. The difference, quite simply, was American leadership. President Clinton said it would be these three and only these three. Only a nasty hiccup by the US Senate failing to ratify the Nato enlargement treaty can derail it, and that looks less likely now that the extra costs have been massaged down by the Nato bureaucracy to a barely plausible $1.3 billion over the next decade.

AMERICAN leadership lies at the heart, not only of the other European problem of an unresolved war in the Balkans, but of the European question more generally. True to their constant post-war strategy of encouraging European integration, the US has given an amicable welcome to the euro, despite the inevitable erosion it will imply for the dollar's dominance as a reserve currency. But American insistence on the primacy of Nato has virtually quashed the French dreams of a separate European security, and thus foreign, policy.

For all its ambition, Europe remains a larger version of what Germany has been for the past few decades — an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military pygmy in thrall to the American Imperium. As long as the British, Germans and most of the smaller European states remain loyal to the Atlantic alliance, that status is unlikely to change.

Some of the cloned lambs that mark a step along the road to 'pharming': scientists hope their milk will yield life-saving human proteins

Cloned lambs may help haemophiliacs

Tim Radford

THE scientists in Scotland who shook the world with Dolly the sheep have done it again. They have now cloned identical lambs that carry a human gene for a protein treatment for haemophilia.

It is a step on the road to a new kind of "pharming" — domestic animals will be used to make new treatments for diseases too difficult or expensive to synthesise in a laboratory. Three of a clutch of six lambs cloned from foetal cells now carry a gene which should make them yield human factor IX, a blood-clotting agent, in their milk, according to a report in the US journal Science last week.

The factor is a vital treatment for haemophilia B, sometimes called Christmas disease. There are about 13,000 patients worldwide, and at the moment about 7,500 of them are treated with a factor made from human blood.

The life-giving lambs are Poll Dorsets and the first of them has been named Polly. They were born from Scottish Blackface surrogate mothers after an experiment by Angelika Schnieke of PPL Therapeutics in Roslin, and eight colleagues. One of these was Ian Wilmut of the government-funded Roslin Institute, who produced two cloned Welsh lambs called Megan and Morag last year, and Dolly the Finn Dorset, grown from an adult udder cell, in February this year.

Dolly was named last week by Science as the top scientific breakthrough of 1997. Her arrival triggered a worldwide storm: there were immediate fears that it would be possible to clone humans. But the Roslin scientists said from the outset that the technique was devised to make genetic manipulation more accurate, to clone valuable animals and, in the longer term, to answer questions about development, ageing and cancer.

The researchers used a technique called nuclear transfer. They took cells from seven foetuses from a flock of disease-free sheep kept at Roslin and inserted a human gene and a genetic "marker" to help them keep track of the experiment.

They selected two sets, and made clones in a culture. They then took the DNA out of sheep's eggs and injected them with the cloned material. Then they put the eggs into surrogate mothers: there were 11 pregnancies. The gestations were longer than average, and some embryos were lost and some stillborn. At the end, Polly and five other lambs were born. All had the marker gene: three also contained the gene for Factor IX.

Because they are only lambs, no one knows for certain that they will actually produce the healing protein in their milk. But another sheep called Tracy, genetically engineered years ago by the Roslin scientists, is now the founder of a flock at PPL Therapeutics — an independent commercial spin-off from Roslin research — which produces a human protein in the milk called alpha 1-antitrypsin.

This is already being used in clinical trials to treat young cystic fibrosis patients; if all goes well it could be on the market by 2001.

Last month the National Blood Authority had to recall and destroy albumin made from the blood of 20,000 human donors, because one of the donors later died of CJD.

The Roslin scientists see their techniques as a way to produce human proteins that will not be contaminated.

Call to ban new crops

FOUR government conservation agencies have called on ministers to introduce a three-year ban on growing genetically modified crops in Britain because of fears of widespread destruction of native birds and insects, and the creation of aggressive mutant weeds, *writes David Hencke.*

English Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Northern Ireland Environment and Heritage Service have warned the Agriculture Minister, Jack Cunningham, of the need for a moratorium until government research is completed.

The plea came as a cabinet subcommittee, chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Clark, approved a white paper setting up a new Food Standards Agency, with a remit for a tougher licensing system to cover genetically modified foods.

Details of the warning from conservationists came in a letter from Derek Langslow, chief executive of English Nature, released to Friends of the Earth. In the letter he says he has warned ministers' of the dangers of "gene introgression leading to herbicide-resistant wild plants which subsequently become aggressive weeds".

The letter goes on: "There is ample evidence that 'conventional' intensive agriculture has already caused widespread losses of farmland birds and insects, and the introduction of genetically modified crops could increase these losses considerably. The use of herbicide-resistant crops such as oilseed rape could leave few weeds in fields, and less food available to farmland wildlife."

IRA men jailed for bomb plot

THREE IRA men were jailed for a total of 62 years at the Old Bailey last week for planning a bombing campaign in England, in a trial that could become a landmark for the ceasefire, *write Duncan Campbell and Richard Norton-Taylor.*

Their conviction was the culmination of the most sophisticated joint surveillance operation yet mounted against the IRA by the police and MI5. Another member of the team was shot dead by police as the men were arrested last year.

As the three were sentenced and a fourth defendant acquitted after the jury had deliberated for 21 hours, a young woman shouted, "This trial will haunt the peace process". Relatives of the men wept.

Brian McHugh, aged 31, was jailed for 25 years for conspiring to cause explosions and 20 years for possessing explosives with intent. Patrick Kelly, 31, was jailed for 20 years on both charges. James Murphy, 26, was jailed for 17 years. Michael Phillips, 22, a British Airways engineer, was acquitted and left the dock after hugging his co-defendants.

Mr Justice Smedley told McHugh he had tried to weave a false story around the death of his fellow IRA man, Diarmuid O'Neill, which had been "sheer hypocrisy".

The trial could have a significant effect on the Irish peace process because it revealed how deeply the IRA has been penetrated.

One in three Britons admit to racism

Stephen Bates

ONE in three Britons is a self-confessed racist, according to a European Union-wide survey released last week.

However, the poll showed that racism in Britain is well below countries such as France, Belgium and Austria, where support for openly racist parties is growing.

Eight per cent of the Britons questioned said they believed themselves to be very racist, and a further 24 per cent estimated themselves as quite racist, compared with Belgium's combined figure of 55 per cent and France's 48 per cent. About 35 per cent of the Britons questioned declared themselves to be not at all racist.

Portugal, Luxembourg and Sweden registered the lowest percentages of avowed racists: fewer than one in five of those questioned.

Jacques Santer, president of the European Commission, said: "This poll confirms our fears that racist sentiments are common across Europe.

"In countries where extremist parties are fanning the flames of racism as many as one in two are saying they are racist. It is a worrying trend that such sentiments are expressed so openly."

Pollsters from the EU's Eurostat statistical office questioned more than 16,000 people across the 15 member states earlier this year about their attitudes to race. They were asked to classify themselves on a scale of one to 10, with those classing themselves above four being counted as quite racist or — above seven — very racist.

Further questions indicated high levels of general dissatisfaction which may fuel racism. It revealed disquiet with the workings of government, mounting concerns about political corruption, and insecurity relating to economic conditions and unemployment levels.

Nearly a third of those questioned had been unemployed and half had had relatives affected by unemployment in the previous five years.

Nearly 80 per cent said they believed minorities paid less in social security than they claimed, 63 per cent said they believed minority groups increased unemployment, and 59 per cent said that minorities abused the benefits system.

Very racist Percentage agreeing with statement

Country	%
Belgium	22
France	16
Austria	14
Denmark	12
Finland	10
Italy	9
Germany	8
UK	8
Greece	6
Holland	5
Ireland	4
Spain	4
Portugal	3
Sweden	2
Luxembourg	2

UK
Not at all racist: 35%
Very racist: 8%
A little racist: 33%
Quite racist: 24%

Not at all racist Percentage agreeing with statement

Country	%
Portugal	58
Luxembourg	54
Spain	49
Ireland	45
Greece	43
Sweden	42
Italy	35
UK	35
Germany	32
Austria	26
France	25
Holland	24
Finland	22
Belgium	19
Denmark	17

MI6 man can still publish

Richard Norton-Taylor

A FORMER intelligence agent, jailed last week for breaking the Official Secrets Act, will be free next spring to go abroad and carry out his threat to disclose details of his work for MI6 in a book that would be the most controversial since the publication of Spycatcher 10 years ago.

Richard Tomlinson, who is still being paid by MI6, was sentenced at the Old Bailey at the end of a case which leaves unanswered questions, including the whereabouts of computers on which he stored sensitive information.

Sentencing him to 12 months in prison, Sir Lawrence Verney, Recorder of London, sitting with two magistrates, said it was his duty to "deter others from pursuing the course that you chose to pursue. We are sadly conscious it may not deter you."

Tomlinson, the first MI6 agent to be prosecuted since George Blake, the Soviet spy, 36 years ago, was arrested in October. He pleaded guilty last month to disclosing information to an Australian publisher. He is likely to be free within a few months to travel to his native New Zealand or another country where he would not be bound by British secrecy laws.

John Wadham, his lawyer and director of Liberty, the civil rights group, said: "This was a completely unnecessary prosecution, and the sentence is unlikely to protect national security."

Ex-council leader must pay £27m

David Hencke

DAME Shirley Porter, the Tesco heiress and former leader of the Tories' flagship Westminster council, was last week branded a liar by a High Court judge and ordered to pay £27 million in surcharges in the "homes for votes" scandal.

Lord Justice Rose and two other judges refused Dame Shirley and David Weeks, her former deputy, leave to appeal against the findings, which land them with the biggest surcharge in the history of local government. Most of the cost will fall on Dame Shirley, as Mr Weeks has few assets to meet the bill.

The judges upheld the finding of a seven-year, £3 million investigation by John Magill, district auditor for Westminster, that they were guilty of "wilful misconduct" and "disgraceful and improper gerrymandering" between 1987 and 1989.

The scandal centred on Dame Shirley's ordering the designation of eight council wards for a sale of council homes, with the intention of preventing Labour winning control of the council.

The policy, which eventually cost the council £27 million, led to charges, upheld by the auditor, that she had been involved in gerrymandering.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Latham and Mr Justice Keene, said Dame Shirley and Mr Weeks "lied to us as they have done to the auditor because they had the ulterior purpose of altering the electorate" in eight marginal wards by selling council homes cheaply to people more likely to vote Conservative. During the High Court hearing, Anthony Scrivener QC, representing Dame Shirley, said she believed, after taking legal advice, that a policy of keeping council homes empty and selling them cheaply in the hope of boosting support for the Conservative party in marginal wards would be lawful and "judge-proof", as long as it was implemented city-wide.

But the judges said that Dame Shirley and Mr Weeks both knew their targeting policy was unlawful and they had improperly decided to dress it up "in city-wide clothes".

The judges added: "Their purpose throughout was to achieve unlawful electoral advantage. Knowledge of the unlawfulness and such deliberate dressing-up both inevitably point to — and we find — wilful conduct on behalf of each of them."

In 1996, Mr Magill made a total of three councillors and three council officials "jointly and severally" liable to repay the £31.6 million he estimated to have been wrongly spent on the unlawful house sales policy.

The judges reduced this figure to £27 million and found three of the accused not guily of wilful misconduct. The case against a fourth person, whose appeal was stayed because of illness, is unresolved.




Dame Shirley: vows to fight on

Despite being landed with an additional £2 million in costs, Dame Shirley vowed to continue the fight. She said in a statement that she was surprised by the ruling against her and Mr Weeks although she was delighted for those who had been cleared of unlawful misconduct.

● An auditor's report into years of alleged freeloading by Doncaster's Labour council has called for sanctions against the politicians involved to recover "unlawful, excessive and unreasonable" expense payments.

Corruption swoop on élite police

Duncan Campbell

UP TO 30 officers in Scotland Yard's elite Flying Squad are under investigation in one of the biggest corruption inquiries for 25 years after statements made by two of their former colleagues who have been arrested on drugs and burglary charges.

Extra detectives have been drafted into the Metropolitan police's Complaints Investigation Bureau (CIB2) in order to deal as swiftly as possible with the amount of extra material generated by the inquiry.

The Flying Squad's offices in Walthamstow, east London, have been searched after roads leading to them were sealed off. Documents have been removed for inspection and desks and cars searched.

Allegations have been made that officers were involved in drug dealing, robbery and the destruction of evidence in criminal cases.

"It is very serious stuff," said a police source. "It is what people have been hinting might happen for a long time."

The latest inquiry follows the arrest of a Flying Squad officer and two former Flying Squad officers who have been charged with aggravated burglary and drug dealing.

The arrests followed a clandestine video operation carried out by CIB2. It is understood that, following the arrests, information about officers was given to CIB2 by two of those held.

The same surveillance techniques used on major criminals are now being employed with suspect officers being put under surveillance, filmed by hidden cameras and with "stings" being operated.

It has been suggested that in one operation, a CIB2 officer pretended to hand in money "found in the the street" in an effort to test the honesty of the officer receiving it.

Officers believed to have leaked confidential information to the press, or to have sold information about celebrities under investigation, have also been targeted. Their telephone calls to reporters have been traced or tapped.

The Tory leader, William Hague, and his bride Ffion, *née* Jenkins, pose for pictures after their wedding last week PHOTO: GERRY PENNY

Import ban challenged

THE Government's policy on BSE suffered a double blow last week when the European Commission challenged the legality of Britain's latest import restrictions and environmental health officials warned that the beef-on-the-bone ban may be unenforceable.

With Scottish farmers converging on Parliament to protest against cheap foreign imports and the new regulations, the Conservative leader, William Hague, backed the Government's critics by publicly eating a T-bone steak in London's Smithfield market.

The most serious threat to the Agriculture Minister, Jack Cunningham, emerged from Brussels where the European Commission began investigating whether the new import rules were legal — a move which revived memories of the Conservative government's bitter exchanges with Europe over the beef crisis.

Mr Cunningham left fellow European farm ministers fuming after the Government's unilateral declaration to bar the import of all beef, sheep and goat meat that has not been slaughtered according to current British standards.

The ban is central to the Government's tit-for-tat strategy aimed at forcing the European Union to lift its ban on British beef.

Soap operas are seriously deadly

Chris Mihill

SOAP operas such as Coronation Street and EastEnders may be fuelling a mood of national pessimism and an unrealistic fear of accidents and illness because the death rate among characters is so high.

The mortality rate among characters exceeds that suffered by steeplejacks and bomb disposal experts, and living in Brookside or Albert Square must be akin to living in a war zone, according to new research.

Tim Crayford, Richard Hooper and Sarah Evans, from the department of public health at King's College hospital, London, have analysed the characters who have died in EastEnders, Coronation Street, Brookside and Emmerdale since 1985.

They compared these deaths with standardised mortality ratios (SMRs) — the number of deaths seen in the population in general — and say that violent deaths among soap characters have been three times higher than would be normal for the person's age and sex.

They counted 17 deaths in EastEnders, 26 in Brookside and 28 in Emmerdale. "Brookside Close and Emmerdale could well be the most dangerous streets in the United Kingdom," they say.

The researchers weighed the SMRs of the characters against real-life occupational risks.

The average death rate in the population is 100, but Coronation Street characters had a rate of 353 and those in EastEnders 771.

Even hazardous jobs appear tame when compared with these rates. Formula One racing drivers have an SMR of 581 and bomb disposal experts 196.

"Could the exaggerated portrayal of these violent and dangerous lives be contributing to our distorted national perceptions about violent crime and death?" the researchers ask.

In Brief

THE Home Office is to pay damages to an Algerian whose detention continued after he had produced evidence to justify his request for refugee status. The judgment may affect hundreds of other asylum seekers.

THE first election for Scotland's new devolved parliament will take place on May 6, 1999, the Government announced. The Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, is currently favourite to become its first leader.

POLICE forces in England and Wales are losing 1.5 million working days a year due to sickness, according to a report by the Inspectorate of Constabulary. Three out of four police officers in some forces are taking early retirement on medical grounds.

A LATE flood of applications from students wanting to start at university next year averted a political crisis for education ministers over their plan to scrap the maintenance grant and to introduce a £1,000 means-tested tuition fee. Without the last-minute surge, numbers would have been more than 20 per cent down on last year.

POSTERS of a hospital letter which clears a young woman of carrying the HIV virus were put up around Catterick army base in an escalating row over warnings of HIV in "local females liberal with their affections" by commanders at the North Yorkshire garrison.

THE Labour MP for Glasgow Govan, Mohammed Surwar, appeared in court on charges of electoral fraud and attempting to pervert the cause of justice. He is accused of trying to manipulate the voter register and of attempting to bribe an election opponent in the run-up to the general election on May 1.

THE Press Complaints Commission ratified a new code of conduct which reforms rules governing privacy, harassment and chequebook journalism.

THE Ministry of Defence admitted that Hull trawlers were hired to conduct spying operations against the former Soviet navy. But it insisted that "specific intelligence gathering" stopped in 1973 — a year before the trawler Gaul sank on what many suspected was a spying mission.

DRIVERS who keep their engines idling at the kerb will face £20 on-the-spot fines under a government scheme aimed at cutting emissions.

LAWYERS acting for the estate of Diana, Princess of Wales, registered a civil interest in the criminal investigation of her death. The move could herald a multi-million pound compensation claim against Mohamed Al Fayed's family business.

Children hungering for a cure

THE HUNGRY child should be fed. This simple statement appears in one of the earliest documents on human rights — the Geneva Declaration of 1924. Three-quarters of a century later, malnutrition remains the hidden source for disease, stunting, mental retardation and early death for millions of children around the world. Unicef's seasonal report, The State Of The World's Children*, calls it a "silent emergency" that is taking a vast toll and yet has stirred too little public alarm. This is not only about victims of flood, famine or flight in Bangladesh, North Korea or Congo. Malnutrition contributes to more than half of almost 12 million deaths a year among children under five in developing countries. Deprivation has increased in the former Soviet bloc — 15 per cent of under-twos in Russia are now stunted. And even in the United States, more than a quarter of all children under 12 go hungry for at least part of the year.

The 729 children rushed to hospital in Japan after watching Nintendo's Pocket Monsters cartoon show attracted rather more attention last week than Unicef's estimate that 226 million children worldwide are stunted. From the Chinese "fat babies" who bring good luck on New Year cards to Britain's own Teletubbies, the preferred image of kids is plumpness — though not the distended stomachs of the malnourished child. Has anyone ever painted a thin baby Jesus?

Unicef's argument is not just an appeal to our consciences. Malnutrition, it says, has a much deeper impact than usually recognised. The problem starts with malnourished women who are pregnant. Low-birthweight babies will have lower IQs than healthy children. Malnutrition is a hidden factor for a wide range of diseases and disabilities — from measles to blindness. It impairs the immune system of five times as many people across the world as HIV.

Unicef offers a menu of measures to tackle malnutrition: some are extremely cheap and straightforward. Oral rehydration therapy already saves 1 million children every year from death due to dehydration caused by diarrhoea. New ways are being explored to look for vitamin A deficiency — with a simple hand-held light focused on the child's pupil — and to test for iodine deficiency — with a simple "dipstick" in the child's urine. Protection against worms costs only a few cents. But the practical measures need to be underpinned by a coherent philosophy.

In terms of national interest alone, social and economic progress depends largely upon better nutrition and improved health and sanitation. Where children grow taller, the figures for gross national product rise too. The connection between poor nutrition and social discrimination against women has to be spelt out. Women who are poor and deprived continue to form the world's largest oppressed class. Unicef can point to the benefits that have accrued in countries such as Zimbabwe, which invested heavily in human resources with special emphasis on access for women and girls.

Rich countries also need to take these lessons on board. A new survey from the Harvard School of Public Health shows that most Americans place concern for their children's health way below drugs and crime — although one in five US children lives below the poverty line. In the end, no matter how inventive the remedial measures may be, it requires political will to carry them out. In poor and rich countries alike, Unicef says, governments can either take positive action, or allow children to become intellectually disabled, physically stunted and vulnerable to illness in later life. There should only be one choice.

**Oxford University Press, £6.95*

Limits to seasonal goodwill

FORGIVENESS is seasonally in the air, and not just in Korea, where two former presidents have been granted an amnesty by the man who was almost murdered by their regimes — the country's newly elected president. In a recent interview, South Africa's Bishop Desmond Tutu spoke with moral authority on the subject. But he was also quite candid in spelling out its political purpose: allowing the guilty to confess their sins — and escape punishment — was, he argues, the price of peace. The security forces "would not have contemplated a settlement without the prospect of amnesty".

Similar motives have underpinned amnesties in countries where the army remains a lurking force with the implicit power of veto. A settlement in Northern Ireland would also very probably involve some degree of amnesty to ensure compliance from the unofficial armies there. But there must be some limits. Would anyone be satisfied in the very unlikely event that the former Bosnian Serb leaders, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, confessed their guilt in order to escape trial at The Hague?

Nor is it always easy to identify who to forgive. Kim Phuc, the Vietnamese girl burnt by napalm whose agony was on the front pages of the world's newspapers, promised forgiveness last year to the pilot — if she ever met him. "I am that man," declared John Plummer, a Methodist minister in Virginia. There was an emotional meeting, and Mr Plummer later told his story on the Internet. Now it appears that he was neither the pilot nor responsible for ordering the plane into the air. He now concedes that he was only "remotely" involved. Yet the story should not arouse too much cynicism. Mr Plummer was perhaps shouldering his portion of a collective guilt that many Americans still deny. And Kim Phuc's act of forgiveness remained unblemished.

Strange parallels in a Korea still divided by cold war imperatives

Martin Woollacott

THERE was once another time when events in a not much known or well understood Asian country called Korea took a turn that frightened the world. What was at stake then was not the stock markets or the global economy, but the globe itself. As North Korean and Chinese troops pushed south in November and December 1950, driving sometimes panicky and disorganised United States, South Korean, and Commonwealth troops before them, Washington came close to using nuclear weapons. President Harry Truman wrote in his diary in early December "It looks like World War III is here . . ."

In early December Clement Attlee flew to Washington to dissuade the US from dropping the bomb. He failed. Using nuclear weapons remained a serious possibility well on into the new year. On Christmas Eve, General Douglas MacArthur sent Washington a list of targets for which he "needed" a total of 34 atomic bombs. MacArthur's dismissal, when it came, did not by any means end the nuclear planning. Congressman Albert Gore, the US vice-president's father, raised the question much later in the war.

It was not a happy Christmas in Washington or other Western capitals. By Boxing Day, the Chinese were over the 38th parallel, the dividing line between north and south, the breaching of which the US had called international aggression when the North Koreans crossed it earlier in the year, but which they and the South Koreans had happily breached themselves when it was MacArthur who was driving the Korean People's Army north.

In the event, Korea was not the third world war, but it was the first major military engagement between the two blocs and it was a vicious war whose cruelties prefigured great viciousness to follow in the next half century. It was, as Max Hastings says in his history of the struggle, "a military rehearsal for the subsequent disaster in Vietnam".

Out of the Christmas panic of 1950 much flowed that before the war was not quite inevitable. The ruthless division of the world into zones of control, the devastation and sometimes the actual partition of societies, such as in Korea, unlucky enough to be at the points of confrontation, the worldwide competition in militarised industrialisation, and the elaboration and accumulation of weapons of mass destruction — all these were given a more complete expression because of the attitudes that were the legacy of the Korean conflict.

It also harshly shaped the country in which it was fought. It brought physical destruction, complete in the North, widespread in the South. If it did not actually create the two Koreas we know today, it certainly fixed the strategies of the two regimes ruling the peninsula. It brought a paradox. Both Koreas were determined to achieve the national strength, economic and military, that would insulate the country from the foreign control or intervention that had been their bitter experience under Japan. They shared the old adage "rich country, strong army".

The conflict between them, however, forced a reliance on foreign allies, making unification, essential for true independence, even more remote. And the demands of that conflict, reinforcing the power of the party élite in the North and the officer corps in the South, contributed to the authoritarianism apparent on both sides of the De-Militarised Zone.

Both sides embarked on a forced industrialisation in which North Korea was initially the leader and the South the laggard, positions now reversed. But the distortions of this industrialisation — the inefficiencies and stupidities of the North and the corrupt relationship between government, corporations and army in the South — bore down on the common people. The hardness of life in the North has often been underlined, but the way ordinary Southerners have time and again paid the price for the irresponsibility of the corporations is less often remarked. The bail-out of 1970, recounted in Bruce Cumings's history of modern Korea, is typical. The corporations, overindebted then as now, got the government effectively to cancel debts owed to ordinary Koreans.

Kim Dae Jung, South Korea's new president, is one of the minority of Koreans who have any memory of the terrible events of 1950. He was 21 when the war against Japan ended and Korea briefly hoped for liberty and unity before the intervention of great powers turned the country's divisions into a supercharged civil war. He almost won the presidency in 1971 against Park Chung Hee and has since survived attempts at murder by truck and by drowning, was arraigned on false charges of inciting the Kwangju rebellion, South Korea's Tiananmen Square, and nearly executed. His election might well be taken as showing that South Korea is, finally, a democracy rather than an authoritarian regime with limited democratic mechanisms. It might also well be taken as showing that the Korean war is finally over, and that the partition which it confirmed will be overcome in the not too distant future. Kim, with his radical background, has always ranked reunification high. The international framework for such an effort is beginning to take shape, with this month's inaugural session in Geneva of peace talks between the two Koreas, with China and the US, a hopeful development.

Fears from the Korean war are the main reason the US will not sign the agreement banning landmines

Yet the difficulties are also great and inextricably tied up with, in particular, the state-directed industrialisation that has characterised both regimes and ended up in both cases in an economic crisis, albeit very different in nature and scale. The North's state industrialisation produced the world's most autarkic economy. Its largely sealed nature eventually brought near-bankruptcy, which the loss of aid from the Soviet Union and agricultural failure has compounded. The South's state industrialisation produced one of the world's most completely export-led and also most dangerously indebted economies. The North had almost no way of utilising outside capital, while the South had, as it now appears, almost too many ways of doing so.

The North's situation naturally increased the desperation of the northern élite after Kim Il-sung's death and contributed to the very dangerous, if largely hidden, nuclear weapons crisis between 1993 and 1995, which could even have led to war but which was defused by the Clinton administration. The South's situation at first led to triumphalism in Seoul and the assumption that North Korea would collapse in the manner of East Germany, and that South Korea would then finance a re-unification, as West Germany did.

But, as the Australian student of Korean affairs, David Reese, pointed out in a recent article, South Korea was apprehensive about the costs of bailing out the North even before the crash. Now such an operation is out of the question. The reform and rehabilitation of its own economy is the priority for South Korea.

Reese suggests that if the North Korean economy does fall into even deeper trouble, with starvation a real prospect, it may be China that comes to the rescue with "just enough aid to keep a separate state functioning in the North, but one that is increasingly dependent" on Beijing. That would be an unhappy outcome. His more hopeful speculation is that the humbling of South Korea may actually ease relations between South and North, since the contrast between the highly successful tiger economy and the highly unsuccessful Stalinist economy now appears less sharp and more nuanced than before. It makes the prospective partners more equal, and perhaps would allow Kim Dae Jung, in time, to bring forward the confederal proposals for re-unification that have always been part of his programme.

The war, however, lives on. The fears of 1950, for instance, are the main reason why the US, which still has nearly 40,000 men in Korea, will not sign the new agreement banning landmines. The DMZ is the most fortified line in the world. The Korean war could be said to have opened our era, so there has been an expectation that the final curtain might be brought down on the cold war's long drama of terrible human damage, dangers avoided more by luck than good management, and actual physical division in the very same peninsula where armed confrontation began. It will not be easy, particularly after South Korea's troubles. But those troubles are at least a reminder that the difficulties of communist states in the past decade are not unique to them, or completely separate from certain problems that capitalist states have also not solved.

Bruce Cumings says that Koreans are learning that civil wars never have single authors. If Korea in 1950 was a lesson that the world refused to learn, perhaps Korea nearly half a century later will be one of which we will take notice.

Bruce Cumings: Korea's Place in the Sun, Norton, $35

Le Monde

France drags feet on Bosnia war crimes

COMMENT
Rémy Ourdan

THE row between France and the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal in The Hague came no closer to being settled after a meeting on December 15 between the French foreign minister, Hubert Védrine, and the tribunal's chief prosecutor, Louise Arbour. The dispute flared up after the defence minister, Alain Richard, said France would "never" allow its officers to testify orally before the court, which he accused of having organised a "show trial". In an interview with Le Monde (see below), Arbour responded by claiming that war criminals felt "absolutely safe" in the Nato sector under French control in Bosnia.

According to French sources, Védrine told Arbour how shocked Paris was at the allegations. He said that French officers obeyed instructions they received from the allies. Arbour later issued a communiqué calling on France to arrest alleged war criminals.

There was a crumb of comfort for France when Nato stressed that decisions of that nature were taken jointly by the allies. "Chief responsibility for handing over war criminals lies with the Muslims, Croats and Serbs," said the Nato secretary-general, Javier Solana.

By focusing attention on the arrest of war criminals, France has deliberately dodged Arbour's initial charge that it had not co-operated with the tribunal in its investigations. A spokesman for Védrine said: "France is co-operating in its own way with the tribunal. It fears that the continuation of peace-keeping operations may be called into question if, at the tribunal and in the media, witnesses and indicted persons are treated in the same way."

This recourse to blackmail over future peace-keeping operations is surprising, and Védrine's explanation is not very convincing. There is only one "way" of working with the Hague tribunal, which France accepted by amending its legislation in 1995.

Nor is there any confusion over the distinction between a witness and an indicted person, and the tribunal has never ventured on to territory involving the possible responsibility of United Nations forces' commanders.

According to foreign ministry sources: "The affair is going to complicate co-operation with the tribunal because the climate of trust has been broken. It'll take us years to convince our officers to continue to take part in hearings, should they be asked to do so."

Richard has told all French military units, including those in Bosnia, that "30 French officers, including generals, have testified in the course of hearings organised by the tribunal".

Arbour told Le Monde on December 15 that "no Frenchman has testified before the Hague tribunal because none has yet been called as a witness", and that "a single person has testified in writing to a Paris magistrate". Thirty Frenchmen have indeed been heard by tribunal investigators, but only in the course of "informal preliminary hearings" to establish whether a person should or should not be called as a witness.

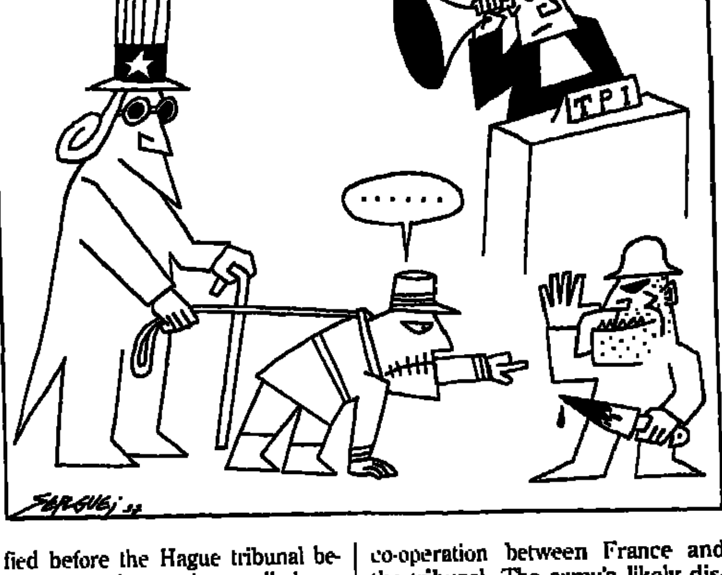
The "non-co-operation" resides in the decision by the French authorities, having accepted informal contacts after months of pernickety negotiations over procedure, to ensure that no hearing should take place before a magistrate. They first scrutinise the list of questions the investigators want to ask, then forbid them to ask officers any question regarded as embarrassing.

It is too early to say if the present row will revive or nip in the bud co-operation between France and the tribunal. The army's likely disgruntlement will anyway not improve its relations with the tribunal.

It remains to be seen if Paris was right to refuse to retract Richard's remarks, which placed France outside the law. Védrine has not answered the tribunal's questions. It also remains to be seen if Nato is planning to take action against war criminals in Bosnia.

"Everyone knows that arrests will compromise the Dayton accords," says a diplomatic source in Paris. The tribunal and all those who believe in a unitary Bosnia and in justice being done now that the war is over think, on the contrary, that the only way to save a wobbly peace process in Bosnia is to lay hands on the war criminals.

(December 17)



'They're trying to control access to the truth'

The Hague war crimes tribunal's chief prosecutor talks to **Rémy Ourdan** about France's recent criticism of the court

WHAT'S your reaction to the accusation by the French defence minister, Alain Richard, that the war crimes tribunal is holding a "show trial", and that France will "never" authorise its officers to give oral evidence there?

His remarks should be seen in context. Since my arrival at the tribunal in the autumn of 1996, I've always been concerned about problems of co-operation with the French military. This autumn, for the first time, we began to see some modest but encouraging progress, which was confirmed by the trip to The Hague by Elisabeth Guigou [the French justice minister] on November 17. I thought there were going to be fewer bureaucratic delays. So the defence minister's remarks came as a surprise.

I find it unbelievable that remarks of that kind should have been made in such a peremptory way. The minister's description of proceedings as a "show" displays disrespect for the 200-plus witnesses who have come before that international court, some of them in circumstances requiring considerable courage, given the precariousness of their situation when they return home without any form of protection.

They testified orally, and allowed themselves to be cross-examined. To suggest that they were making a show of themselves is contemptuous and shocking.

As regards the refusal [by the French government] to allow French officers to testify at The Hague, two things worry me. First, in view of the pace at which we are being given access to their written evidence, it is worrying to think that this is the procedure that has been chosen by France. We have to negotiate every fresh question with defence ministry jurists.

Secondly, this leads us to think that France's real intention is to control the tribunal's access to the truth. It is behaviour that reflects a desire not to co-operate with the tribunal, and which also squares perfectly with the military authorities' extremely disappointing position over the arrest of alleged war criminals.

Has the French government notified you that it will not take part in the arrest of war criminals?

No, but the facts speak for themselves. The only arrest ever made in Bosnia was in the British sector. The great majority of those indicted, including the most important ones, are in the French sector. There is substantial scope for action in the French sector, yet what we see is total inactivity. Hence my conclusion that this is a deliberate policy. It is unacceptable.

Is France the only country which, after taking part in United Nations operations in the former Yugoslavia, has criticised and even hindered the tribunal's work?

The military world in general has not been as enthusiastic about the tribunal as we had hoped. I thought that people in military circles, who are the most immediately concerned by the rules of war, would feel involved. For the rules of war are what enables a distinction to be made between a soldier and a murderer.

One might have expected Nato to demand that the first priority of its mandate should be the arrest of war criminals. Instead of that, what we saw was sometimes active, sometimes passive resistance on the part of the military.

If one is going to compare the policies of countries, there are differing degrees of unco-operativeness. What I find worrying is the very negative and very firm nature of the French defence minister's remarks.

Belgian officers have given evidence before the Arusha tribunal [on the Rwandan genocide] and British officers have testified before the Hague tribunal: they emerged neither traumatised nor discredited. A comparison could be drawn with the support we've been getting from the British government, at both political and financial level, as regards investigations and arrests. It's been exemplary, and other countries, such as Germany, Canada and the United States, have followed suit. Seen in that light, France's failing is rather remarkable.

Do you have the legal power to force France to authorise its officers to testify?

I don't want to speculate on the means available to me. Clearly an international tribunal set up by the UN Security Council should not be at the mercy of diktats. The Hague tribunal's statutes stipulate that witnesses should be heard orally.

The most surprising thing of all is that the minister's concern is unfounded, since it is not within the competence of the tribunal to discuss the moral, political or civil responsibility of such persons, institutions or governments. That is neither our mandate nor our intention.

What is the attitude of the Americans, who are supervising the peace process in the former Yugoslavia? They haven't arrested anyone either.

I do actually have frequent differences of opinion with them over the energy they are prepared to put into arrests. On the other hand, they co-operate very closely with the tribunal by providing financial and political assistance.

A direct and firm intervention in the French sector could have positive consequences, for it is in the French sector that there are many war criminals, and at the moment they feel absolutely safe there.

(December 14-15)

OAU fails to settle dispute in Comoros

Jean Hélène in Addis Ababa

THE Organisation of African Unity's summit on the Comoran question, which was held in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, from December 10-13, ended without significant progress being made on the main subject of dispute: the territorial integrity of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros Islands and the establishment of a transitional period during which a new constitution would be drawn up.

The only thing the separatists and the government agreed to do was to hold, "an inter-island conference as soon as possible, to define a new institutional framework that meets the Comorans' legitimate aspirations".

The OAU organised the summit in the hope of solving the crisis that came to a head when separatists took control of Anjouan island and made a unilateral declaration of independence on August 3. A similar uprising immediately ensued on the neighbouring island of Mohéli, whose inhabitants also complained of being marginalised by the government.

Pierre Yéré, the OAU's mediator on the Comoros issue, feels that the conference enabled a dialogue to begin.

But the separatists on Anjouan and Mohéli, resisting pressure from their compatriots and the international community, have managed to avoid recognising the territorial integrity of the Comoros Islands. They are now waiting for Grand Comoros island "to declare its independence in its turn", so that the future of regional relations between the three islands can be debated at the next meeting.

The government also says it is satisfied with the results of the meeting. It succeeded in resisting opposition demands for President Mohamed Taki to step down and for the introduction of a transitional period during which the constitution would be amended to give greater autonomy to each island.

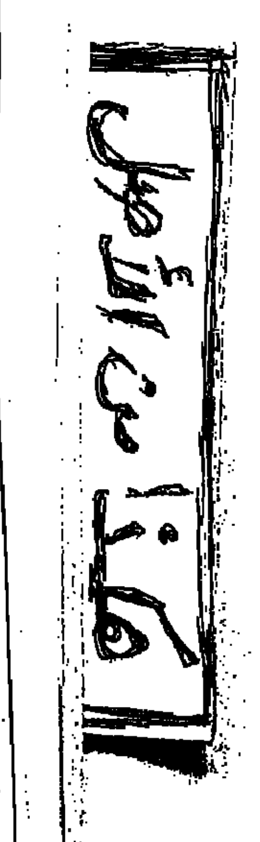
It now remains to be seen if Anjouan can survive economically: it has practically no resources except money from the Anjouan diaspora.

Some advocate a total blockade of the rebel island in order to force it to abandon its separatist plans. But for that to be possible France would have to ban all sea links between Anjouan and Mayotte, the fourth island in the archipelago, which chose to remain French when the Comoros gained independence in 1975, thus enabling France to maintain a strategic military presence in the Mozambique Channel.

France's role in this latest of several Comoran crises was the subject of much speculation at the OAU conference. Most delegates thought that Anjouan would remain a problem as long as Mayotte remained under French rule.

The people of Anjouan have a strong argument when they claim that the "territorial integrity of the four Comoros Islands as recognised by the UN has not existed since Mayotte went its own way".

(December 16)



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 28 1997

Iranians undergo a sporting revolution

Mouna Naïm in Tehran

"WHATEVER you write, please describe what happened the other day, when the Iran national football team beat Australia," says Shirine. She can still hardly believe what happened, so overjoyed is she at the way the Iranians seem to have come to their senses, begun to express themselves and spontaneously taken to the streets.

She remembers the watershed of the May 23 election, which, against all expectations, swept the moderate Mohammed Khatami to the presidency of Iran. "There was such a huge crowd," Shirine remembers. "There were people everywhere. Girls, yes girls, were dancing on car bonnets, some of them without their *chadors*. They felt free to do so. Young people were chanting 'Iran! Iran!' instead of 'Islam! Islam!' I'm still getting a buzz from it."

Whoever you talk to in Tehran, the conversation comes round to the celebrated football match of November 29 in Melbourne, when Iran beat Australia and qualified for the finals of the 1998 World Cup in France.

On top of the team's qualification — which flattered the Iranians' fierce and deep-rooted nationalism — the spontaneous welcome the players got when they returned to Tehran four days after the match was widely seen here as politically significant.

Iranians seem surprised to discover that the baby boomers of the Islamic revolution of 1979, who make up half the population, want to make their voices heard and refuse to remain trapped in an ideological straitjacket.

"They're talking," says Shirine. "The other evening one of the players interviewed on television wasn't afraid to lament the fact that no representative of Iran was present in Marseille at the draw for the final stages of the World Cup.

"He was quite prepared to say there were hidden forces that wanted to prevent the team from going to Paris, and he said so on television, which is entirely controlled by the conservatives. We may be making our first steps towards democracy."



Iranians openly celebrate their national side's World Cup qualification PHOTOGRAPH: JAMSHID MAIRAMI

Ibrahim Yazdi, president of the Movement for the Liberation of Iran, an illegal but tolerated opposition party — who has since been arrested by the authorities — also sees a parallel between May's presidential election and the spontaneous outburst of November 29.

"The whole country, in cities, towns and villages, took to the streets," he says. "There was a veritable national uprising. I would put it down to the collective unconscious. Within an hour, without anyone having issued any call for action, people found themselves gathering together. I can think of only one historical precedent, and that was when the shah left Iran." That is something which Yazdi believes President Khatami's opponents are bound to have to take into consideration.

Everyone remembers how several hundred young women forced their way into Tehran's Azadi stadium, where the players were being welcomed back. The security forces, who had received orders to allow only men into the stadium, were swept aside by an avalanche of women.

"The whole thing was entirely unexpected," says Murad Saghafy, editor of Goftegu magazine. "What was odd was not only the atmosphere of festivity, but the enthusiasm for football — and especially the enthusiasm shown by women.

"It was an expression of people's desire to liberate themselves, to give of themselves, to be interested, to be physically present. I was surprised by the scale of the phenomenon, and also by the atmosphere in which it all took place: people were very joyful, calm and well-behaved."

As for the security forces, some of them reportedly received orders not to intervene. "I was told that in some places the *bassijis* [volunteers who enforce Islamic behaviour] wanted to step in, but in most cases people in the crowd persuaded them to dance with them. After all, the *bassijis* are young 20-year-olds too, so why shouldn't they dance?"

According to another intellectual, one paper even reported that the main mosque in Tehran, Husseiniye Ershad, was empty on the day the Iran team qualified. People also made puns on the event, saying that after its qualification for the *jame jahani* (World Cup) Iran would qualify for the *jamee jahani* (international society).

"The country is undergoing a fundamental change, and its leaders don't yet know how to handle it," says a Western diplomat. The outburst of feeling on November 29 gave flesh to bare statistics: "It was possible to see with one's own eyes how many young people there are in this country and what 50 per cent of the population being under 20 really means," he says. Those young people are increasingly determined to make their voices heard.

(December 11)

'Brothers' help to curb violence on buses

Nathaniel Herzberg

INCREASING violence on French public transport has, paradoxically, had the effect of boosting social affairs minister Martine Aubry's recently introduced youth employment scheme. Young mediators, called "elder brothers", "messengers" or "ambiance agents", are being taken on by transport companies in a bid to defuse possible clashes on vehicles serving "sensitive" suburban areas.

Eric Macé, a researcher with the National Scientific Research Centre, has just published the first assessment of an experiment initiated by the Paris Transport Authority (RATP) three years ago: 27 "elder brothers" aged between 20 and 30 were put on some bus routes in the northern suburbs of Paris following a spate of incidents on buses taking young people to the Torcy sports centre.

Their job was "to mediate". They themselves came from deprived areas in the region and were familiar with "the ethos, and sometimes even the identity, of trouble-makers". It was not easy for them to integrate into the RATP. They were taken on just after RATP staff had gone on strike to protest against a syringe attack on a driver.

"At a time when drivers were expecting better security arrangements — secure driving cabins, more ticket inspectors and security agents, a return to the use of conductors — they were not given a satisfactory explanation as to why young men with swarthy complexions and black bomber jackets were working on their buses, particularly as they came from outside the RATP," Macé notes.

"In the reigning atmosphere of exasperation, fear and racism, that was enough for [the driver] to regard the 'elder brothers' as 'scum'." The jobs, which were "precarious and required special dispensation", only fuelled the misgivings of RATP staff, whose children had increasing difficulty in getting taken on by the transport authority.

But in time the experiment was shown to be useful. The mediators' chief task, to reduce unruly behaviour, was undeniably successful. When drivers got to the time of day that they most dreaded — the end of school — they found they no longer had to deal with bus doors being jammed open, emergency windows taken out and seats damaged. "The youngsters know us well, and they put valid tickets into the stamping machine," says one mediator.

While some drivers are doubtful about the usefulness of mediators outside that particularly difficult time of the day, Macé draws a different conclusion. The mediators' actual tasks extend far beyond a purely theoretical sphere, since they possess a wide variety of skills, from a knowledge of behavioural codes and a sense of contact to strength of character and sang-froid.

Although they do not work in the evenings, their presence throughout the day exposes them to particularly tense situations. "We have to deal with pitbulls and gangs with dogs," says one mediator. "And there we are, trying calmly to explain things to them. But we can easily get knifed." Another says: "We've never been attacked, but we've saved lives."

Macé underlines the originality of this "prevention through dialogue, as opposed to repression, which can often make the situation worse". But he also points to "the paradox of a prevention campaign designed to create greater security that relies on staff who themselves have no job security".

"Most of the time, when someone works for a company," says one mediator, "he wants recognition, he wants to be promoted. But there's nothing like that here."

The possibility of eventually landing a job as a driver is something touted by the RATP. But trade union hostility to any form of special dispensation in the hiring process and management's refusal to give mediators permanent jobs, whatever the reactions of RATP staff, mean that that prospect does not often materialise.

Macé lays much of the blame at the RATP's door, and urges the transport authority "to turn the function of mediator into a genuine job, and also to allow it to prepare people for such jobs as bus-driver, conductor, security agent or urban mediator".

(December 11)

Playing up as the boss of bosses

EDITORIAL

INSTITUTIONS are often caricatures of themselves. That was illustrated once again when Ernest-Antoine Seillière de Laborde, known to common mortals as EAS, was elected head of the French employers' federation (CNPF) on December 16. Even though he is averse to smoking fat cigars, EAS is in many ways an epitome of the type of employer that was apparently becoming extinct.

But one can only hope, for the sake of the French economy as well as French society, that behind the apparent caricature there in fact lurks a shrewd diplomat capable of pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

As a well-born heir to a large fortune, a graduate of the prestigious National Administration School (ENA), and a man of great self-confidence, EAS is himself laden with symbolism.

He is a descendant of the De Wendels, one of the so-called "200 families" that were so derided before the second world war. That did not stop him winning the academic laurels that are vital for anyone wishing to make a career in politics or the civil service. Like Alain Juppé and Lionel Jospin, France's former and current prime ministers, he is an *énarque* — a graduate of ENA, not exactly the kind of college that specialises in training company bosses.

A financier rather than an industrialist or retailer, EAS is not one of those thrusting young businesspeople who started from nothing and went on to create companies and jobs — models of dynamism and daring that the CNPF normally likes to promote.

To get elected and perhaps to obscure his image in the eyes of CNPF members — who are angry with the government and its *énarques*, especially about the proposed 35-hour working week — the new boss of the CNPF had no hesitation in waging an extremely aggressive campaign.

He claimed that he intended to "destabilise Lionel Jospin", and even to "bring him down". He repeatedly attacked the notion of equal representation in wage bargaining talks. There again, he deliberately put across the image of an arrogant company boss from a privileged background who apparently refuses to accept the verdict of the ballot box,

Now that he is the bosses' boss, EAS would be well advised to prove that the caricature was wrong and to drop his campaign promises. As a neo-liberal and a Europhile, he knows that the market is also a contract, and that what France needs is not the demise of social dialogue, but its renewal.

(December 17)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

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Stuck With Yeltsin's Bedside Manner

COMMENT
Jim Hoagland

THE YEAR ends on Russia for the Clinton administration exactly where it began: hoping against hope that an ailing Boris Yeltsin will recover and ride herd over an increasingly troubled U.S.-Russian relationship.

President Clinton's Russia policy, which began with bold strokes and strategic vision of an active partnership, has dwindled into wishful thinking about Yeltsin's hospital charts and what the Russian president will do when he recovers from his latest emergency hospitalization for a "cold."

On Iraq, NATO expansion, the leakage of Russian technology to Iran's missile program and other sensitive matters, Clinton has had to appeal directly to Yeltsin over the past 12 months to sidetrack challenges from Moscow to American interests and goals in foreign policy.

It has largely worked, although the administration says it is not satisfied on the Iran missile problem. When push comes to shove, Yeltsin seems ready to order his ministers to do what Clinton seeks. Administration officials say the Russian leader is responsive when he is forced to choose between bucking America or keeping the Western financial aid that cooperation with the United States unlocks.

A relationship between the world's two greatest nuclear powers that is driven by mild diplomatic coercion from Washington is a sorry substitute for the ambitious partnership Yeltsin's commitment to integrating Russia into the West originally inspired. Worse: It will not work for very long. The coming year is a time when the Clinton administration should broaden its approach to Russia, whatever the state of Yeltsin's health.

The dangers of strategic dependence on a single mortal are obvious and much discussed within and outside the administration, which seems to have no clear picture of who or what would follow an abrupt departure from power by Yeltsin. Less discussed but just as important are the illusions about Russia that dependence on Yeltsin creates in Washington.

For the White House and State Department, Yeltsin seems to occupy the position of the czar in the old Russian adage: "If only the czar knew. He would not allow it."

This has been another Moscow year of false starts and abrupt stops on deep fiscal reform, of sudden retreats on fighting corruption and correcting the errors of a privatization program that strip-mined Russian industry for the benefit of a privileged few. It is now hard to believe that this situation is accidental or due largely to Yeltsin's lack of knowledge or interest in economic matters.

Yeltsin continues to shuffle reformist and status quo governing teams, inspiring lurches of change that are stymied when vested interests feel threatened. The West, through the International Monetary Fund, responds by halting loans for a while to squeeze Moscow on tax collection and other fiscal priorities. But the fund resumes the loans when Yeltsin's position seems to grow shaky.

Who is coercing whom? Yeltsin needs the aid. But Clinton needs Yeltsin to have a semblance of a Russia policy. Important originally as a detonator of change, Yeltsin has now become a symbol of an illusory stability created at the top. He must be supported: His inability to pursue genuine, root-and-branch reform for more than six months at a time must be overlooked and even financed from abroad, in Washington's view.

There has been a strong argument for this view for much of Yeltsin's reign. But that reign is coming to an end, and so is the utility of that argument. If his current illness is far less serious than his quintuple bypass surgery and double pneumonia of last winter, it is far more serious than a cold, diplomatic sources say.

In any event, Russian politics no longer present a binary choice between the Communist Old Guard and Yeltsin. Other faces and forces will dominate the next elections. Russian society has moved beyond the model of trickledown stability that Washington assumes still prevails.

The integration of Russia into world organizations requires the development of a healthier, less corrupt Russian financial system. Politics too must change, moving away from the autocratic rule Yeltsin has refused to alter, even though the price has been the creation of a void when it comes to succession.

These are the hard choices that Russia has to be encouraged to make. Relying on Yeltsin to deliver diplomatic goodies, while overlooking his willful refusal to work seriously for a system that does not depend on a czar-like leader, is shortsighted strategy. The goodies are certain to disappear when Yeltsin does.

Yeltsin meets Prime Minister Chernomyrdin at a sanatorium outside Moscow last week

Army Urged to Train Females Separately

Dana Priest

A CIVILIAN panel appointed by the Pentagon has concluded that female and male military recruits should be segregated during much of basic training and live in separate barracks in order to avoid an erosion of discipline and cohesion, according to defense sources.

The panel, headed by former senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker (R-Kansas), said Army, Navy and Air Force drill instructors have become so preoccupied with preventing cases of sexual harassement that they are spending too much time concerned with separating men and women and not enough time training them to act like a military unit.

"Because many trainers now insist their recruits refrain from talking to the opposite sex at all times," much of gender-integrated training today "provides little in the way of meaningful integration," the report says.

The panel's recommendations, released last week, came as a surprise to many defense officials and will likely provoke a new round of discussion about how to integrate a growing number of women into the armed forces.

This year, senior defense chiefs staunchly defended training men and women together after the practice came under attack by Republicans in Congress following the sex scandal at the Army's advanced training base at Aberdeen, Maryland. The panel was appointed by Defense Secretary William S. Cohen in the aftermath of the Aberdeen scandal.

Separating the sexes during part of their training "will really strengthen the whole process," Kassebaum Baker said in an interview. She said the military appeared to "be losing sight of" the difficulties associated with mixing sexes and with the basic mission of training, which is to instill discipline and turn young adults into soldiers.

Kassebaum Baker said the panel strongly supports gender-integrated training, but simply believes mixed-gender troops should be together in training only part of the time, in marching and when learning technical and physical skills.

Defense officials, who asked not to be quoted by name, said the recommendations will likely be divisive within the Army, Navy and Air Force, each of which is still fighting their own gender wars over the further integration of women in their services.

The Marine Corps is the only service that trains male and female recruits separately. They believe sex-segregated training removes a potential distraction from the discipline they are trying to instill and that, for women in particular, it helps develop self-esteem.

For proponents of increasing the role of women, integrated basic training has always been a bellwether of how seriously each service has been in trying to get the male-dominated military culture to more fully accept women. For them, the Kassebaum Baker report represents a major setback.

"Anything that separates the men and the women is counterproductive," said Gen. Evelyn "Pat" Foote, a retiree called back to active duty to co-chair a study of sexual harassment for the Army this year. "They are reacting to the headlines of the last year. Integrated training does not cause sexual harassment."

The panel, which interviewed 1,000 recruits and 500 instructors over the last six months, said it was concerned that trainers had become so worried about potential sexual harassment that they had instituted a "no talk, no touch" policy among recruits. Under the policy, men and women in the same unit are not allowed to talk to one another unless a witness is present.

Cohen will ask each of the services to review the panel recommendations and to report back to him in 90 days, officials said.

The panel also recommends toughening basic training requirements, making female and male physical standards more similar, hiring more female drill instructors and improving the instruction on what constitutes sexual harassment and other unprofessional behavior.

Without Nelson Mandela

EDITORIAL

AS NELSON MANDELA, now 79, steps down from the helm of the African National Congress, the party that led South Africa from apartheid to nonracial democracy, anxiety is evident all around. No other living political leader enjoys the respect he has earned for his legendary personal courage, dignity and vision and for his success in presiding over a delicate, urgent and generally peaceful national rebirth. In his farewell to his party, he noted — in order to rebut it — that fear is being deliberately stirred by people muttering "when Mandela goes."

There is reason to believe, nonetheless, that the transition will be managed. His replacement as party chief now and his heir apparent to the state presidency is Thabo Mbeki, 55, his protege and experienced deputy. Democracy and nonracialism may be new and, by President Mandela's own accounting, incomplete in South Africa, but he ensured that they were fairly launched.

In his nearly four years in office, he has kept the country on a democratic course and begun creating and distributing the economic and social benefits that many citizens expected the new political order quickly to bestow. Naturally, this goes slowly and even with agony. Mr. Mandela has held to the market policies that promise future growth, notwithstanding pressures for prompt redistribution from ANC constituencies in the trade unions and the old Communist ranks.

A speech Mr. Mandela gave in stepping down from the ANC helm struck a confrontational note in sharp contrast to the conciliatory tone marking much of his career as a national leader. The largely white opposition political parties were depicted as suggestively racist, disloyal and subversive; the media and certain nongovernmental organizations supported by official American aid were harshly criticized. Some South African observers saw in these words the hand and the future agenda of Thabo Mbeki.

At the least these passages hint at tensions buried so deep in the South African multiracial context that not even a Nelson Mandela could resolve them.

Mr. Mbeki's own approaches will no doubt evolve as he takes power. In any event, with Mr. Mbeki South Africa enters a phase where mere mortals strive. Inside the country, the pressures are more likely to harden than to ease. Outside, the tendency to count on one man — a tendency born of admiration and of hope for a successful model of racial reconciliation — is bound to diminish. Nelson Mandela's "new South Africa" is suddenly not so new anymore.